



## **NICARAGUA: LAND OF LAKES, FORESTS, AND VOLCANOES**

**JANUARY 19 - 27, 2018**

### **TRIP SUMMARY**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Exploring a stunningly diverse country that is still off the mass tourism radar
- Hiking, kayaking, bird watching, swimming, bird watching, and possibly volcano surfing
- Learning about both the history and the current challenges that Nicaragua faces
- Meeting some of the amazing women who are contributing to Nicaragua's future
- Enjoying the legendary warmth and hospitality of the Nicaraguan people

## TRIP AT A GLANCE

<b>Dates:</b>	Jan 19 - 27, 2018
<b>Location:</b>	Managua, Nicaragua
<b>Cost:</b>	\$2,495.00
<b>Activities:</b>	Hiking, kayaking, cultural immersion
<b>Arrive:</b>	Arrive anytime January 19th at the Managua airport
<b>Depart:</b>	You are free to leave anytime after 11AM on January 27th

### TRIP OVERVIEW

Explore Nicaragua's natural and cultural attractions at the largest lake and the oldest colonial city in Central America, 28 volcanoes, outstanding biodiversity, legendary hospitality and emerging ecotourism. On our nine day trip we hike and kayak through different ecosystems, from mountain lakes to cloud forest, learn about Nicaragua's human and natural history, experience the lively Festival of St. Sebastian with music, parades and performances, meet a women's weaving cooperative, and completely change our image of this beautiful area, which many Americans still associate with the controversial US involvement in Nicaragua's 1980s civil war. Maximum group size: 12

### RATING

This trip is an excellent choice for women who enjoy being active, who are comfortable in a country that is still developing, and who do not mind moving on most days. The trip is rated 2. Prior to beginning the trip, participants should be walking regularly at a **brisk** pace 3 to 4 days a week for 35 - 45 minutes. **Rating:** 1 [2](#) 3 4 5

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A Nicaraguan guide (who may be male) and an Adventures in Good Company leader
- Eight nights double occupancy lodging
- All activities specified on the itinerary
- Private transportation within Nicaragua
- All meals from dinner the first night to breakfast the last
- Gratuities for the driver and day guides
- Snacks and water to refill bottles

**Not included:** Travel to Managua; guide gratuities; alcoholic beverages

## OUR ITINERARY

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

### DAY 1

#### JANUARY 19, FRIDAY



After you arrive at the Augusto Cesar Sandino International Airport just outside Managua, a hotel shuttle will transport you to the hotel. If you can get there before 4pm, please do. But if not, we'll greet you at the hotel whenever you arrive. We'll gather as a group for introductions and a trip orientation, and then continue getting to know each other as we share our first dinner together. Overnight at Hotel Camino Real, Managua D

### DAY 2

#### JANUARY 20, SATURDAY



After a delicious breakfast of tropical fruits, eggs, and local favorites like Gallo Pinto, we head out of the city. Our first stop is San Juan de Oriente, the "Village of Pottery", to see talented artisans using pre-Columbian techniques to create beautiful pottery. Our final destination is the town of Diriamba for the Saint Sebastian Festival - an unforgettable experience! Throughout the day and evening we'll enjoy a variety of Nicaraguan cultural performances, parades, and music honoring Diriamba's town patron Saint Sebastian. For example, the performance Gueguense, a synthesis of Indigenous and Spanish cultures, is considered by UNESCO to be a masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Overnight at hotel [Mi Bohio](#), Diriamba for the next two nights. B,L,D

### DAY 3

#### JANUARY 21, SUNDAY



Today we visit Granada, one of the most beautiful cities in Nicaragua. We'll take a walking tour around this historic colonial city, which is also known as La Gran Sultana, in reflection of its Moorish and Andalusian appearance. After lunch, we get oriented to kayaking. We'll paddle around the islets on the largest lake in Central America, Lake Nicaragua, also known by its indigenous name, "Cocibolca" which means "sweet sea." We will be rewarded by gorgeous views of the Mombacho volcano, many species of birds, and perhaps a dip in the refreshing water! We will also stretch our legs at the awe-inspiring view point over the Apoyo Lagoon and Lake Cocibolca. Overnight at hotel Mi Bohio, Diriamba B,L,D

## DAY 4

## JANUARY 22, MONDAY



After breakfast, we drive 3 hours to the Indigenous Community El Chile, and a visit with one of the women's cooperatives that is keeping the Nicaraguan weaving culture alive. For three decades these ladies have been reviving traditional weaving techniques, and creating beautiful fabrics. During our visit we will share a delicious lunch of traditional foods. Later we'll walk through the community and up to the viewpoint of Cerro El Chile (Chile Hill), for a 360-degree view of the valley and surrounding mountains. Overnight at [Hotel San Jose](#), Matagalpa B,L,D

## DAY 5

## JANUARY 23, TUESDAY



Today's focus is sustainability. We go to La Hammonia Estate, an organic farm with a diversity of crops, including coffee, features sustainable growing techniques. We tour the farm, learning about its interesting model of efficiency and sustainability. After lunch we'll explore the nearby cloud forest with a three hour hike. This tropical forest habitat is home to the Resplendent Quetzal and an amazing variety of wildlife, including more than eighty varieties of orchids, many birds, sloths, deer, snakes, mountain lions, and howler monkeys. We then continue onward to the highlands of Nicaragua, to spend the night at "Eco-Albergue La Fundadora," a sustainable farming cooperative and eco tourism project located on one of Nicaragua's largest and most historic coffee estates. Rooms have panoramic views and the sunsets are gorgeous! This evening we'll experience Nicaraguan culture through a presentation by local performers. Overnight at [La Fundadora Ecolodge](#) B,L,D

## DAY 6

## JANUARY 24, WEDNESDAY



After a hearty Nicaraguan breakfast, we'll have an authentic and informative experience with a local family at the coffee plantation. We will learn about the whole coffee process -- from seed to cup -- in a traditional Nicaraguan way. You'll have a whole new appreciation for coffee next time you have a cup. Today we also experience a traditional lunch with a local family at their house. Then we'll have a three hour drive to our next destination, the historical city of Leon. Our walking tour will showcase the architectural and natural attractions of this incredible colonial city, known as the political and intellectual center of the nation. Overnight at [Cacique Adiact](#), Leon B,L,D

## DAY 7

## JANUARY 25, THURSDAY



One of the biggest attractions of Leon is its volcanoes, especially Cerro Negro, as it is easy to hike to the top and fast to get back down. We will hike for about an hour to the top for a wonderful panoramic view of the countryside and surrounding volcanoes. If you are up for an optional rush of adrenaline, you can try the unique sport of "volcano boarding" where you slide down the volcano on a board, or hike down if you prefer a slower descent. Later, we will head towards the coast and take a boat to the nature reserve Island Juan Venado, known for its impressive mangrove sanctuary. Mangroves are salt tolerant trees; they have a salt filtration system and can only be found in places that have tropical or sub-tropical climates. They make perfect hiding spots for wildlife, so naturally wildlife abounds. The reserve is home to 106 bird species, caymans, crocodiles, iguanas, crustaceans and several species of sea turtles. Overnight at Cacique Adiact, Leon B,L,D

## DAY 8

## JANUARY 26, FRIDAY



Today we visit Masaya volcano, an active, complex volcano composed of a nested set of calderas and craters that provides us the opportunity to see molten lava in the crater. After lunch we travel to Apoyo Lagoon, one of the most majestic places in Nicaragua. The lagoon was actually formed in a caldera. The natural beauty of the place, the abundant flora and fauna, and the calm and clean water of the place, all make it the perfect place to spend our last afternoon and evening. We'll stay at Apoyo Resort, situated in the heart of the Tropical Dry Forest Reserves; we'll be surrounded by monkeys, parrots, and tropical birds. We can swim in the lagoon - one of the few swimmable crater lagoons in the world - where the mineral water is cool enough to refresh but warm enough to enjoy. That night we'll celebrate our week together, toasting the beauty of the country and the warmth of the people we've met along the way. Overnight [Apoyo Resort](#) Masaya B,L,D

## DAY 9

## JANUARY 27, SATURDAY



After one final breakfast together it's time to pack up and head for the airport. It's about an hour drive and we'll have you back in time for flights after 11am.

## ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

### GETTING THERE

Plan to fly into the Augustino Sandino International Airport (ACS) in Managua, Nicaragua. The hotel is 5 minutes away from the airport and a free shuttle is available.

**If you would like help with any travel plans we recommend** our travel agent Sara Schuitemaker at sara@scaneastwest.com or call 800/727-2157

### ACCOMMODATIONS

We are staying at a variety of accommodations, mostly ecolodges that range from the rustic lodging in Fundadora to the more upscale Apoyo Lodge. Every place we stay is clean and comfortable, with ensuite bathrooms. Vegetarian options for this trip will be limited. Other types of dietary needs cannot be accommodated unless supplemental food is brought.

### WEATHER

January is typically one of Nicaragua's most delightful months, with high temperatures in the mid-80s and low temperatures in the low 70s. Temperatures are higher close to the coast and lower at the higher elevations. This is one of Nicaragua's least rainy months, with an average of 5 inches of precipitation.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND TRIP CANCELLATION/TRIP INTERRUPTION INSURANCE, WHICH COVERS YOUR COST IF YOU NEED TO CANCEL OR INTERRUPT YOUR TRIP for medical reasons, trip delay, lost baggage, and other unforeseen emergencies. Adventures in Good Company will send you information about travel insurance with your registration information, or you may purchase coverage through your own insurance company. In order to avoid disappointment and expense in the event that you must cancel your trip we strongly urge you to purchase some type of insurance coverage. You can also sign up for it online at [Travelex Insurance](#). To get the best rates, use 20-0016 as your location number on the Get A Quote page.

# PACKING LIST

## FOOTWEAR

- 1 pair of comfortable shoes for general use
- 1 pair lightweight hiking boots or shoes: light boots, athletic shoes with a good sole (the trails are uneven terrain and can be muddy)
- 2 - 3 lightweight pair socks: (Thorlo, Smartwool, running socks, etc.)

## CLOTHING

- 2 pair lightweight pants/capris: synthetic (Supplex, or nylon/polyester/spandex blend)
- 2 pairs of shorts: Quick drying nylon is recommended
- 3 - 4 T-shirts (synthetic for paddling and hiking is recommended)
- 1 - 2 lightweight, long-sleeved shirt for hiking and sun protection - button up front is the best
- 1 lightweight raincoat with hood - **waterproof**/breathable fabric like Gore-tex
- 1 wide brimmed or baseball style hat for protection from the sun/rain (a string tied to the hat will keep the wind from blowing it away)
- 1 medium-weight top layer – synthetic or wool pull over - fleece or wool vest works well for this layer
- Underwear/nightwear
- Bathing suit (nylon shorts and a running bra also work as swimwear)
- 1 – 2 changes of casual clothes to wear at end of day

## ESSENTIALS

- Passport** and Xeroxed copy
- 1 one-quart water bottle, must be wide mouthed for refilling purposes
- Headlamp or flashlight and extra batteries
- 100% UV sunglasses with case and retention strap
- Small day or fanny pack for day use (hiking)
- Ear plugs (for a good night's sleep)
- Bandanna
- Insect repellent
- Wristwatch/travel alarm clock

## TOILETRIES (small everything)

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, hand sanitizer, shampoo, contact lens paraphernalia, sanitary supplies
- Sunscreen and lip protection with an SPF of 30 or greater
- Personal first aid/patch kit - Band-Aids, 1 safety pin, moleskin, compeed (or blister bandages), ibuprofen, any personal medications

**Please note: Individuals who have had or have the potential for a severe allergic reaction to insect stings, specific foods or medications must bring an epi-pen. Please consult your physician and tell your guide.**

## OPTIONAL (not required, personal preference)

- binoculars
- book
- waterproof camera bag
- extra sunglasses
- journal and pen
- gloves for paddling (bike gloves work well)
- camera, film/memory card, and an extra camera battery
- powdered hydrating drink mix (Gatorade, lemonade, etc.)
- small dry bag to carry wallet, passport, sunscreen, etc. for day use while paddling. A garbage bag inside your day pack can also work well.

\*\*\*Hiking poles are optional but do come in handy on two hikes if you normally use poles

## NOTES ON PACKING

Adventures in Good Company's packing list covers everything you need to assure your safety and comfort. You may not use everything you bring; however, you need to come prepared for all possible weather conditions. At the same time, you must be able to carry your own luggage, sometimes up and down stairs. **As space for luggage on our trips is limited, please stick to the packing list as closely as possible.**

**Clothing:** The clothing listed on the packing list has been chosen for your specific trip. Nicaragua is typically pleasant at this time of year – as it is summer and usually warm and humid – with some rain. Bring clothing that can get wet and are easy to wash out (synthetics are best).

**Rain Gear:** We recommend a jacket made of coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric. This layer will be worn as a wind-proof layer as well as a rainproof layer on this trip, so having it be breathable is a good addition. Coated nylon is not very breathable, but it is lightweight, waterproof, and can be relatively inexpensive. Gore-tex (and other brand-identified waterproof materials) is a great material, but can be quite expensive. If you have any questions about raingear, please call us.

**Personal First Aid Kit:** Bring a small first aid kit with familiar medicine and first aid supplies you might need. Recommendations include the following: blister or foot remedies like moleskin, Compeed, blister bandages, or similar, a small role of duct tape (always useful!), remedies for respiratory ailments, stomach ailments, sore muscles or joints. The guides will have a first aid kit but having what you know works well for you is a good idea.

**Hydration:** Being able to easily access your water without assistance, so that you can drink frequently, is important to your safety and enjoyment. One method is to have a WIDE-MOUTHED water bottle attached to your waist strap. Another option is to use a **HYDRATION SYSTEM** such as CamelBak, Platypus, and MSR bladder bags, which are collapsible water bags with a hose attachment that you drink from. The bags fit inside or outside your pack with the hose positioned over your shoulder so that you can access your water as you hike.

**Trekking Poles:** Trekking poles are optional for this trip. Trekking poles contribute to your safety by improving your balance and stability, and to your health by saving stress on your hips and knees. If you are not familiar with trekking poles, read this blog post that addresses the most commonly asked questions:

<http://blog.adventuresingoodcompany.com/blog-women-travel/bid/154714/Trekking-poles-for-hiking-trips-the-4-most-common-questions> .