



20 Days

Nicaragua

Black Sand Volcano Expedition

This three week expedition is a fantastic introduction to the vibrant culture and dramatic scenery of a beautiful, yet little visited part, of Central America. With smoking volcanoes, lush forests, idyllic islands and UNESCO World Heritage sites, this expedition is incredibly diverse and a wonderful opportunity to get to know the locals of this friendly country. We spend time on two different volunteer projects, working along side the locals. With the political problems of the past long put to bed, Nicaragua is a safe and beautiful country where the culture remains vibrantly authentic. Not yet on the main stream tourist bucket lists, this expedition is a great insight into an undiscovered destination



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1

Arrive Nicaragua

Depart the UK and fly to Nicaragua with a change of planes en-route. Bienvenidos! On arrival day at Managua International Airport, our expedition leader (guide) will give you a warm welcoming and you will be transfer to Managua city.

Day
2

Transfer from Managua to Leon city. Telica sunset volcano tour hike

Today our driver and guide take the group to Leon City, a journey of around 1 hour and 40 minutes. Telica Volcano is one of the most active volcanoes in Nicaragua. There are many footpaths that branch off in all directions which makes route finding confusing. Staying on the trail without a guide would be difficult, but our expert leaders, born and brought up in the country, know this place like the back of their hand. This is a challenging uphill climb. The farmers' fields gives way to jungle which engulfs the trail. The higher elevation offers views of the surrounding farming communities and amazing views of the volcanoes San Cristóbal, Cerro Negro, Momotombo, and the Las Pilas-El Hoyo complex. The trail flattens and the jungle opens up. Views of Volcan Telica's billowing smoke can be seen. There is a flat, cleared area about 1000 ft. / 300 m east of the crater – the perfect spot for a rest and time to take in the view. From here, there is a path that leads to the northeast rim of the crater. We will proceed with caution and peer over the edge into the mouth of the crater. The views of the lava are much more impressive at night when the lava glows red. This elevated ridge is a great vantage point to watch the sunset.

Day
3

Juan Venado Wildlife Reserve. "La Gigantona" Workshop

We head to the stunning Juan Venado Island situated 1 hour away of Leon city. Juan Venado is a barrier island and measures 22km in length. It stands out as a thin strip near the coast of Nicaragua. It is a wildlife refuge for marine species that migrate in their larvae phase from the ocean to the peaceful and rich waters of the estuary. We head back to Leon city where we have a cultural presentation & workshop about "Las Gigantonas" which is a tradition of Leon city - giant hollow figures several meters tall with a paper maché head and arms, and wood or aluminum frames covered in opulent clothing. The figures are controlled by someone from inside the structure. They move and shake in a dance usually accompanied by a local marching band.

Day
4

Sandboarding at Cerro Negro (The Black Hill); Leon city Tour

Climbing Cerro Negro Volcano is an impressive experience. This active volcano (726 meters in altitude) is totally covered with black sand and rocks. Standing on top of this volcano you will have an unforgettable view over the volcanic chain of Central America. We descend the volcano at top speed on sand-boards. This afternoon, we have a León city tour will begin at its colonial heart with a visit to the Metropolitan Cathedral, the largest in Central America, and the Main Plaza. During the walking tour you will get to know the historic murals of the city and will understand the role played by León in the social, economic and political development of Nicaragua.

Day
5

Transfer from Leon to Granada city. Walking tour and boat ride

We transfer to Granada city where we have a walking tour to get to know this amazing city. We then continue to Lake Nicaragua for a relaxing boat ride around some of the islands formed by the impressive Mombacho volcano. We have this afternoon to relax.





Day
6-8

Project days at Eco Escuela

The following 3 days sees the group spend time working on a community project with Exo Escuela, a local education community. Local schools have to deal with serious difficulties, like not having restrooms, no drinkable water, not enough chairs for the children to seat on, lack of educational materials and such like. The group will get involved and work on what is most required by the community at the time of the visit.

Day
9

Ferry to Ometepe Island

This morning we transfer to Rivas to take the regular ferry to Ometepe Island. If the weather allows we can enjoy the panoramic views of the volcanoes (Concepcion & Maderas), which beautify this unique Island. We explore the island and also visit the Charco Verde Nature Reserve.

Day
10

Expedition to San Ramon Waterfall

Today we enjoy the beautiful nature of Ometepe Island. On the slopes of the volcano 600 meters above sea level is a beautiful waterfall, over 145 meters high known as El Salto San Ramon. We travel to the Biological Station San Ramon where a 3 hour walk through the forest takes us to the remarkable waterfall before returning the same way.

Day
11

Excursion to Maderas Volcano Slopes & Petroglyphs path

Today we visit the slopes of Maderas Volcano. Ometepe is famous for its rich pre-Columbian past and belongs to the great rock art areas of the world. Ancient petroglyphs (rock carvings) and stone statues have been found all over the island. The hike takes 3 hours approx., after which, we move to Ojo de Agua - a natural spring just inland from Playa Santo Domingo which has been expanded to make a huge swimming pool of crystal clear water.

Day
12-16

Working & overnight at La Paloma Community (homestays)

For the next 5 days the students work on a social project to help La Paloma community in diverse areas such as community cleanups, help to work in the medical plants garden, agricultural works, painting & building schools in the community, recycling of glass bottle & sharing time with locals.

Day
17

Transfer to San Juan del Sur for surf lessons

Today we leave our friends and families at La Paloma and catch the ferry back to San Jorge where we transfer to San Juan del Sur for some well deserved relaxation on the beach and our surfing lessons.

Day
18

Snorkeling Tour & Visit Aventura Las Nubes eco park

After breakfast we head out for a morning of snorkeling before we transfer to Parque Aventuras Las Nubes, situated on top of a mountain at the highest point of San Juan del Sur. Here there are spectacular views and the best bird watching sites in the area. Spider Monkeys, White Faced Capuccin monkeys, Howler monkeys, Tucans and Hawks abound on the mountain tropical forest. Surrounded by a tropical forest, we have an exciting day of adventure including a canopy tour on zip lines, Off-road driving, a nature walk and a visit to an Iguanarium. We overnight in San Juan del Sur.

Day
19-20

Departure & arrive UK

After an outstanding expedition and a thorough immersion into Central America.

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase in your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey



1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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