Discover the natural and cultural highlights of six Central American countries on this three-week tour which travels from Panama to Guatemala. Visit wildlife-rich national parks and remote islands, uncover ancient secrets in Mayan ruins and roam around colonial cities.

**HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS**

**Trip Highlights**
- Panama City - visit the famous Panama Canal and explore Central America's most cosmopolitan and wealthy capital
- Boquete - ride in a chicken bus and explore Panama's coffee-growing country
- Bocas del Toro archipelago - discover Panama's pristine islands, with their laid back Caribbean vibe and beautiful beaches
- Sarapiquí - visit some of the wonderful national parks in the area or the Sarapiquí River
- Monteverde National Park - hike through the beautiful cloud forest, shrouded in a canopy of cloud and home to a wonderful array of flora and fauna
- Leon - explore this charming old Colonial town
- Granada - stroll around Central America's oldest Colonial city on the shore of Lake Nicaragua
- Ometepe - spend three relaxing days on this exquisite volcanic island in the middle of Lake Nicaragua
- Copan - take a guided tour of the world famous Mayan ruins of Copan
- Antigua - Guatemala's delightful colonial town
- Masaya National Park – visit Nicaragua's beautiful volcanic crater lakes and walk to the rim of the active volcano
- Suchitoto - take in El Salvador's captivating cultural capital

**What's Included**
- 21 Breakfasts
- 21 nights 3-4 star hotels
- Arrival and departure transfer on days 1 and day 22
- Transfers & transportation in private air-conditioned vehicles with one public bus journey from Panama City to Boquete
- Escorted by an English-speaking local tour leader
- Walking tour of Granada, Panama City & Canal, and Antigua
- Guided tour of Mayan ruins in Copan
- Excursions to Masaya National Park and market, Monteverde Cloud Forest, Colon island, Ometepe Island

**What’s Not Included**
- International flights and visas
- Tipping - refer to the Tipping paragraph in the Trip Notes for further information
- Border entrance & exit fees - Approx $35USD

**ITINERARY**

**Day 1: Panama City**
Saturday. Welcome to Panama City! Upon arrival at the airport you will be met by a local representative and escorted to the group hotel where the rest of the evening is at leisure to explore the capital before meeting the rest of the group the following morning.

**Overnight - Panama City**

**Day 2: Panama Sightseeing**
We spend the morning exploring Central America’s most cosmopolitan and wealthy capital. We start off walking through the Paitilla district where the skyline is dominated...
Wonders of Central America

by Hong-Kong style skyscrapers until we reach the colonial heart of San Felipe where we wander through the narrow streets discovering delightful plazas. We then continue our tour to Panama Viejo, the remaining part of the old Panama City which was ransacked by the infamous British buccaneer Henry Morgan in 1671.

We then venture out of central Panama and make our way to the Panama Canal, the world-famous waterway that connects The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The visitor centre gives us an insight into the history of this extraordinary feat of engineering before finishing our tour watching the ships transit between oceans at the Miraflores Locks. **Overnight - Panama City (B)**

**Day 3 : Boquete**

Panama City - Boquete. We board the bus this morning and journey along the Pan-American Highway across Western Panama to the city of David. Once we reach the city of David we swap our bus for an old American school bus, or as the locals call it ‘chicken bus’s as we make our ascent to Boquete, along the windy roads through the mist and into the cloud forest. The cool, clean air comes as a pleasant change from the heat of Panama City. The rest of the day is free to explore the heart of Panama’s coffee-growing country – go on a coffee tour, or venture approximately 50 meters from the centre for a visit to the charming San Ramon waterfall which offers 50 meters from the centre for a visit to the charming San Ramon waterfall which offers crystal clear waters. **Overnight - Boquete (B)**

**Days 4-5 : Bocas del Toro**

Boquete - Bocas del Toro. We have the morning at leisure to finish exploring Boquete before our bus takes us to the Caribbean coast across the continental divide as we make our way to Colon Island. We make our way to Almirante, known for the export of bananas grown in the humid landscape, along the forested mountain scenery. From Almirante we board a ferry across the Caribbean Sea to the Bocas del Toro archipelago. We reach Isla Colon, the capital of the Bocas del Toro archipelago, and our home for the next two nights.

The beautiful islands of Bocas del Toro remain isolated from mainstream tourism, but it won’t be long before this densely wooded region of secluded bays, coral reefs and Guna Indian settlements is firmly on the map. Only the largest island, Isla Colon, has any roads and there is one major settlement here, Bocas. Bocas is a sleepy, rather unkempt but charming fishing town where we spend the next two nights.

The rest of the day 4 and all of day 5 is at leisure to explore the islands. Look out for the Indian fishermen who live in the stilts houses above the water and travel solely by canoes relying on their paddle power to get them around. For those wanting to discover some of the rich wildlife in the area there is an optional excursion to Bastimentos National Marine Park where you spend the day delving into the jungle or exploring the white sand beaches, snorkelling around one of the coral atolls. Alternatively take a short boat trip to the deserted islet popular with playful dolphins to sit under the palm trees or cruise along the mangroves spotting marine life under the crystal clear waters. **Overnight - Bocas del Toro (B:2)**

**Days 6-7 : Sarapiqui**

Bocas del Toro - Sarapiqui (Costa Rica). We make our way back to the mainland today where we meet our bus and take a short scenic journey through the countryside until we cross the Costa Rican border. We then continue our scenic drive along the road from Sicoa to Bribri where tropical plantations surround us and stretch as far as the eye can see. We continue to the Caribbean coast along the highway to Limon and onto our base for the next two nights, Sarapiqui. This small town is a popular base for travellers looking to take advantage of the wonderful national parks in the area, dispersed between the banana and pineapple plantations.

The next day is free to explore this beautiful region or just enjoy some relaxation. The dense foliage creates an enticing habitat for many species of bird and wildlife and there are numerous national parks to explore. You can view the canopy from above via a series of hanging bridges and towers, or hike along trails that wind through the trees.

For the more adventurous the Sarapiqui river is popular for rafting on its rapids and there are plenty of other activities on offer such as mountain biking and nature-viewing boat trips where you may spot bird species such as hummingbirds, great green macaws, quetzals and toucans. **Overnight - Sarapiqui (B:2)**

**Days 8-9 : Monteverde National Park**

Sarapiqui - Monteverde. This morning we make our way to Santa Elena on the edge of the Monteverde National Park, a beautiful sanctuary of verdant cloud forest in the Costa Rican mountains. We have a day to explore this exquisite region, with a guided tour of the Cloud Forest or Cuircancha Reserve depending on where the best wildlife is. There are also optional excursions to visit a butterfly farm or canopy tour over the cloud forest. **Overnight - Monteverde (B:2)**

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Wonders of Central America - 22 days

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This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.

- 2 -
Wonders of Central America

Days 10-12: Ometepe Island

Monteverde - Ometepe Island (Nicaragua). We descend from the cloud forest, across coastal plains, through Liberia, the provincial capital of Northern Costa Rica, before crossing the border into Nicaragua. Our journey then continues along the shores of Lake Nicaragua to San Jorge where we catch a ferry across the lake to Ometepe Island. Keep an eye on the horizon to get a glimpse of the twin volcanic peaks rising proudly out of the lake.

The next two days are free to explore this serene and undeveloped island. Hike through the rain forest that covers most of the island and spot the different species of monkeys and parrots or visit the pre-Colombian petroglyphs and stone statues which were carved by the Chorotega Indians. The island offers scenic and challenging walks on the slopes island’s volcanoes – Maderas and Concepcion, as well as horse riding and fishing excursions. You can also visit one of the many coffee cooperatives on the island. Alternatively, sit back and relax, enjoy views across the lake and take a dip in its warm waters. Overnight - Ometepe Island (B:3)

Day 13: Granada

Ometepe Island - Granada. After breakfast we make our way back to San Jorge and onto the Spanish colonial town of Granada, once one of the wealthiest cities in Latin America. On arrival our tour leader gives us an informal orientation walk around the city’s cobbled streets as we take in the neo-classical and colonial architecture and vibrant coloured buildings of this picture-perfect city. After checking into our hotel, we have the rest of the day to go for a stroll around the food stalls, listen to traditional music or take a historical horse drawn carriage ride. Overnight - Granada (B)

Day 14: Masaya National Park

We take an excursion to the Masaya National Park today, home to the only active volcano in the country, that allows visitors to visit the rim of the crater. We take time to walk to the hilltop fort of Coyotepe, a military fortress which was then extended into a dungeon below and served as prison for political enemies. We then move on to visit the volcanic crater lakes and the still active volcano for an unforgettable experience before making our way to the town of Masaya for a stroll along the handicraft market. Return to Granada for an evening at leisure. Overnight - Granada (B)

Day 15: Leon

Granada - Leon. We continue our journey north this morning across the volcanic plains of Momotombo volcano to Leon, another restored colonial city. The rest of the day is ours to explore the cobbled streets and shady plazas around the town centre where we get a feel for the strong liberal traditions that makes this city the country’s radical and intellectual centre. As we stroll through the streets we notice the Sandinista heritage that is still visible today with the large murals and revolutionary graffiti plastered over some of the towns white walls. Overnight - Leon (B)

Days 16-17: Suchitoto in El Salvador

Leon - Suchitoto (El Salvador). An early morning bus journey finds us cutting across the coastal plain of Choluteca to the border of Honduras where we enter El Salvador, Central America’s least visited country. We continue to drive until we reach the untouched colonial city of Suchitoto, where the streets come alive at the weekends for food and arts festivals and the laid-back locals make this amazing town considered the cultural capital of the country.

We then have the rest of the evening and following day to explore Suchitoto and its surroundings. Take a short hike to the Los Tercios waterfall, try some local delicacies such as chicha, an alcoholic drink made from corn or the traditional pupusas, thick corn tortillas with meat, vegetable and cheese fillings. For those looking for to immerse in the natural surroundings there is an array of biodiversity to discover in the area. Overnight - Suchitoto (B:2)

Days 18-19: Copan Ruins

Suchitoto - Copan (Honduras). We make our way across the remote region of western Honduras to the village of Copan, home of the world famous Mayan ruins of Copan. The region is famous for its velvet green hills and whitewashed colonial buildings where the main form of transport is still horse and carriage and prosperity comes from the coffee and tobacco trade. We spend the night at the close to the site where we have the opportunity to go for a short hill walk to some nearby hot springs.

The next day we explore the Copan ruins, considered to be one of the most spectacular
sites of ancient Mayan civilisation. Here we uncover the secrets and mysteries behind the history of this lost city through the hundreds of hieroglyphs that were sculpted into the stairs before the city was abandoned due to the constant droughts that destroyed crops in the area. Within 100 years the jungle reclaimed the city until the Spanish rediscovered it in the 16th century. **Overnight - Copan** (B:2)

### Days 20-21: Antigua

Copan - Antigua (Guatemala). After breakfast we take the 10-minute drive to the Guatemalan border before continuing onto colonial city Antigua, the land of eternal spring, set against a spectacular backdrop of towering volcanoes. The rest of day 20 and all of day 21 are free to explore this picturesque colonial city, which cannot fail to enchant, with its cobbled streets, parks and plazas, and colourful street markets, all set against a spectacular backdrop of awe inspiring volcanoes. Here, the local indigenous people dressed in colourful costumes can be found selling their crafts and textiles and as the cultural centre of Guatemala, Antigua is an ideal place to experience the traditional music, architecture and art of the country. **Overnight - Antigua** (B:2)

### Day 22 : Antigua

Our tour comes to an end today and it’s to make our way to the airport and return home. We can arrange post tour accommodation if you want to extend your stay. (B)

## HOTELS

The hotels listed below are ones which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard when necessary.

### Tirimbina Rainforest Lodge

Nestled in the Tirimbina Nature Reserve in the Sarapiqui region, the Tirimbina Lodge, along the Sarapiqui river, is perfect for nature lovers. The property features an extensive garden which offers more than 9km of walking trails over suspension bridges and through lush forest in the hopes of seeing some of the resident wildlife. Each air-conditioned guest room features a fan, safety box and garden views. Other features of the Lodge include a terrace, guided excursions through the Nature Reserve and an onsite restaurant that serves buffet food using fresh ingredients.

### Monteverde Country Lodge

Combining cosy rustic style with comfortable facilities, the Monteverde Country Lodge offers a warm welcome to its guests. The neatly kept gardens are a lovely place to relax whilst the wooden guest rooms offer an escape in one of the world’s most famous cloud forests. Located less than 10 minutes away from the Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Preserve and in a walk-able distance from Santa Elena Downtown.

### Hotel Villa Paraiso

Located on the forested Ometepe Island, in a secluded corner on Santo Domingo beach is the Hotel Villa Paraiso. The comfortable air-conditioned cabins are equipped with cable tv and private bathrooms with hot water as well as a front porch with hammocks and chairs, so guests can sit back, relax and enjoy the scenery. After a day of exploring the island, enjoy an authentic meal at the onsite thatched bar and restaurant or take a dip in the onsite pool surrounded by lush forest.

### Hotel Con Corazon

Boasting a central location in Granada, this modern hotel is located within minutes of the colonial plaza. Its guestrooms offer patio and swimming pool views, alongside free WiFi, TV, and air-conditioning. Start your day with breakfast in the on-site restaurant or take a dip in the on-site swimming pool. As well as offering all modern comforts, all profits from the property and invested into local education projects.

### Hotel Austria

Situated in a central location in downtown Leon, this hotel is a five-minute walk of a wide variety of churches, colonial buildings and the beach. Its air-conditioned guestrooms are equipped with flat-screen TV, private bathroom and toiletries. Start your day with a continental or American breakfast or sit back and relax in the courtyard.

### Posada Suchitlan

Boasting an excellent location on the edge of Suchitoto’s mains square with spectacular views of the valley and lake Suchitlan, is the Posada Suchitlan. Guest rooms feature warm-coloured bed spreads and are equipped with TV, air-conditioning and views of the colonial courtyard or lake. Guests can enjoy a daily continental breakfast and a selection of regional dishes n the on-site restaurant. The hotel also features a swimming pool fringed with greenery, so guests can take a dip after a long day of sightseeing.
Wonders of Central America

La Casa De Café
Located just a stones throw away from the Copan Central Park, in a colonial village is the La Casa De Café. The comfortable guestrooms are equipped with hot water, ceiling fan and oversized windows offering spectacular views of the Copan River, the mountains and the properties very own tropical garden. The hotel also features a massage parlour, extensive library, and on-site restaurant, so guests can watch the sunset while enjoying their dinner.

Villa Colonial
Set on a quiet corner in Antigua, within walking distance of the capitals main square is the Villa Colonial. All guestrooms feature a shared balcony or patio, cable TV and private bathroom with toiletries. Start your day off with a complimentary breakfast in the courtyard garden before taking a dip in the swimming pool. After a day of exploring this UNESCO-listed city, you can dine in the onsite restaurant offering a mix of local and international cuisine.

PRICES / DATES INFO
Prices shown are per person travelling. ‘Twin/Double’ prices per person apply when there are 2 people travelling, sharing a room. The ‘Single supplement’ applies for single travellers who require their own room and needs to be added to the ‘Twin/Double’ price. If you are happy to be paired up with another single traveller of the same sex on your tour, this can be arranged, thus avoiding the single person supplement.

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