

Semana Santa

(Holy Week)



Antigua, Guatemala

With

John & Anita

March 27 – April 5, 2018

Semana Santa in Guatemala with Explore Guatemala

Tuesday Guatemala City	3/27	Fly to Guatemala City and after clearing customs, you will be met outside as you exit the customs area. You will travel to the colonial city of Antigua and the renowned Hotel Casa Santo Domingo , which is built around the ruins of a Dominican monastery founded in 1542. The magnificently restored hotel and grounds include an extensive collection of Guatemalan Spanish Colonial religious works of art and is considered the most complete archeological monument in the Americas.
Antigua's Casa Santo Domingo Dinner	Open	Dinner this evening will be on your own as we await all arrivals.
Wednesday <i>Miércoles Santo</i>	3/28	We will have a leisurely morning and a fabulous breakfast in the Dining Room of The Monks.
Breakfast	8:00	After breakfast we will explore the grounds, museums , and archeological sites of this 16 th Century Monastery, which was once a stronghold of one of the grandest of all convents in the Americas. This monastery was partially destroyed in the Santa Marta earthquake of 1773. The hotel is notable in that it preserves the architecture from the baroque period of ancestral America and contains a number of treasures from this period on display. Additionally, the grounds contain some of the best-preserved archeological discoveries of the period.
Monastery Tour	9:00	
Church San Francisco		We will visit the Church of San Francisco, a Monastery of the Franciscan Order and the tomb of recently canonized Saint Hermano Pedro de San José de Bethancourt, a Franciscan friar of the late 17 th century, who was known for his great charity and love for the poor.
Lunch	TBA	Lunch today at Café Sky, overlooking the Church San Francisco
Jade in Guatemala	3:00	Later, meet at the Jade Factory/Museum to learn of the rediscovery of the lost Jade mines of the ancient Maya, after which you may shop for your special piece of jade jewelry (beware of “Jade” sold elsewhere and in the streets, as it typically is not certified as real jade).
Semana Santa Presentation	6:00	Free time to explore this magnificent Colonial City. This evening we will gather for a glass of wine and a special <i>Semana Santa</i> (Holy Week) presentation and slide show by a local expert on Antigua and <i>Semana Santa</i> , an American who has lived in Antigua since 1969 and has authored many books about the area.
Dinner	7:00	Dinner tonight in the Monastery's Five Star Hotel's Dining Room of The Monks. (B/L/D)
Thursday <i>Jueves Santo</i>	3/29	We will have a fabulous breakfast in a reserved area in the Dining Room of The Monks; eat hearty since we will have a late lunch today. Walk to the Parque Central where we will visit the Cathedral, view the Captains General Palace, and begin our walk through the <i>calles</i> to view the Alfombras (beautifully hand crafted carpets) created by resident's and businesses of Antigua for the Religious processions. Be prepared for an incredibly moving experience while viewing one of the most remarkable and elaborate religious events in the Americas. The religious procession begins with 60 men (<i>cucuruchos</i>) who lift and maneuver an enormous 7000 pound float that carries the 17th century statue of Jesús Nazareno del Perdón out of the church.
Breakfast	7:00	
Walking Tour	8:00	
Alfombras		
San Francisco Procession		

Lunch Convento Capuchinas	TBA	This is immediately followed by another float of the Virgin de Dolores carried by over 40 women. Each float (<i>anda</i>) being followed by its own processional band. Once the procession has left the church We will take you through the streets of Antigua, moving ahead of the procession for photo opportunities. Lunch at one of our favorite restaurants in Antigua. After lunch there will be a special tour of the Convento Capuchinas, one of the most unknown and misunderstood, but one of the best preserved, of all the colonial buildings in the new world.
Free time Dinner	Open	Free time to explore Antigua. Dinner on your own tonight from one of the many exceptional restaurants in Antigua. We will hand out a recommend list. (B/L)
Friday <i>Viernes Santo</i>	3/30	Depart for La Merced Church where you will witness the largest and most solemn of the Lent and Holy Week processions. We will follow the route of the procession in order to view some of the most colorful carpets before they are walked over by the processions. Then we will skirt the procession locating the best places to view and photograph this magnificent event.
La Merced Carpets and Procession	5:15	
Breakfast Lunch	9:30 Open	Return to the Casa Santo Domingo for breakfast and a rest. Lunch on your own, then free time for shopping and exploring Antigua.
Free Afternoon Until 4PM		In the afternoon, preparations are made for a mock trial and sentencing of Jesus Christ where participants are dressed as Jesus, Pontius Pilate and Roman soldiers. After 3 p.m. on Good Friday, the time appointed by the Church when Jesus died, peeling church bells let all of Antigua know that it is time to change from purple (the color of passion) to black (for mourning). A float with a sculpture of Jesus carrying the crucifix leads crowds of mourners who pray silently and offer penance. The participants in this solemn procession dress in black. In the late afternoon, we will view the procession from the Escuela de Cristo Church – depicting the Crucifixion. In the evening, floats with statues of the crucified Jesus are returned to the churches.
Viewing of Procession depicting Crucifixion	4:00	
Dinner	6:45	Meet to walk to dinner at one of Antigua’s favorite restaurants. (B/D)
Saturday <i>Sábado de Gloria</i>	3/31	Breakfast in the Dining Room of the Monks.
Breakfast	7:00	Free morning to explore Antigua or just relax before our next adventure.
Luggage Collection		Please be checked out, have your bags packed and outside your door before going to breakfast. At 11:00 our bus, departs for Lake Atitlán and the comfort of Hotel Atitlán. We will travel through the highlands to a mountain chalet smokehouse for a typical Guatemala lunch. From here we will move on to the lake and Hotel Atitlán, one of the most charming boutique hotels in Guatemala with its secluded pathways and enchanting botanical gardens, distant views of surrounding, towering volcanoes, terraced mountainsides, and charming villages.
Depart for Lake Atitlan	11:00	
Lunch	TBA	
Hotel Atitlán		After arriving at Hotel Atitlán, settle in, relax, or take a walk in the beautiful and tranquil botanical gardens surrounding the hotel.
Social Hour	6:00	Meet in the bar for Social Hour, wearing your newly acquired <i>traje</i> .
Dinner	7:00	A superbly crafted dinner by the chefs of Hotel Atitlán. (B/L/D)

Sunday Breakfast Departure for Chichi	4/1 7:00 8:00	An early breakfast, then depart for Chichicastenango, where the traditions of the past encounter the present in a kaleidoscope of colors and a fury of activity. What brings the Indigenous Maya to Chichicastenango again and again is exactly what brought their distant ancestors down from the mountain villages or out of the jungles to the pyramids and plazas of Kaminaljuyu or Tikal or Xelaju - the chance to exchange goods at the market, to socialize for a day before returning to the hard work and grinding routine of tending mountain or jungle corn fields, and to bring offerings and prayers to the altars and temples of the gods who ruled their lives. Be totally present to experience this; an amazing day! We will visit the Santo Tomás Church to witness the convergence of the Catholic religion with the ancient Maya rituals, then on to the Chichi market brimming with handmade arts and crafts as well as everything imaginable for, of, and by the indigenous Maya Indians. We will meet for lunch at our favorite Chichi restaurant. After lunch, we will return through the magnificent Guatemalan highlands with spectacular vistas, to Hotel Atitlán,
Lunch Departure	TBA TBA	Gather in the bar for a social libation before we dine on a meal especially prepared for us by the chefs of Hotel Atitlán. (B/L/D)
Social Hour Dinner	6:00 7:00	
Monday Breakfast	4/2 7:00	Today will be an opportunity to just relax and enjoy your magnificent surroundings, or if you prefer, options abound from hiking in the Atitlán Nature Reserve where you can take a nature walk, see a butterfly habitat, or try the zip-line at Cables X-tremos ... all a ten minute walk from the hotel. You may also choose to take a tuk-tuk (small passenger vehicle) into the nearby town of Panajachel for a little shopping and people watching, or stroll through the exquisite botanical gardens of Hotel Atitlán where you will discover over 200 varieties of roses, an orchid collection, a tropical heliconia garden, a small English style knot garden, as well as see their many exotic birds. The swimming pool is heated, the Jacuzzi is delightful, and an incredibly relaxing massage may be arranged at the front desk.
Wine and Churrasco Rancho	6:00	Tonight we will meet in the Ranchito (located in the lower gardens) for a wine reception and dinner at the water's edge. Dress in any newly acquired <i>traje</i> (native wear), share stories of the day, and dine on <i>Churrasco</i> (a Guatemalan Barbeque). (B/L/D)
Tuesday Breakfast	4/3 7:00	After a sumptuous breakfast, we will depart for a boat trip around the lake, stopping first at the Maya village of San Juan La Laguna to visit a cooperative for demonstrations of weaving and dyeing techniques followed by an opportunity to purchase the completed textiles. You will see village life of the Maya, have an ethno-botanical garden medicinal plants tour, and visit a maguey (Agave or Century plant) production center where maguey is prepared for weaving the plant fibers into usable bags rope and construction.
Boat Departs	8:00	
Maya Tz'utujil Home Social Hour		Next, our boat will take us to the private lakeside home of Candis and son, Cameron Krummel, for both a cultural and an ecological experience. Their unique home, featured in Architectural Digest August 2002, is built in the traditional style of Maya Tz'utujil architecture. Our hosts will prepare a delicious traditional Tz'utujil gourmet festive lunch. You will never forget this memorable experience.
Social Dinner	6:00 7:00	Social hour and dinner. (B/L/D)

Wednesday Breakfast	4/4 7:00	Breakfast, then savor a morning of leisure, swim in the pool, take a last minute look at the breathtaking scenery, or walk through the delightful gardens. Have your luggage packed and ready to be loaded on the bus after lunch.
Kayak Option	8:00	Optional: For those interested, Kayak Guatemala is offering a morning Kayaking tour with optional Cliff Jumping on Lake Atitlán. This will be a “soft” adventure and a chance to swim in the lake.
Lunch	12:00	Lunch on the terrace
Departure	1:00	Departure for Guatemala city.
Dinner	7:00	You will spend the night at the beautiful Hotel Vista Real overlooking Guatemala City and the volcanoes, Fuego and Agua. (B/L/D)
Thursday Breakfast	4/5 Open	Breakfast on your own as departures are staggered and early. Arranged departures to airport for flights home.

* B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

- The itinerary is carefully planned but it may be necessary to make minor changes to take advantage of new travel opportunities or experiences.

Included in your *Semana Santa* Tour: ▪ 10 days, 9 nights at unique and luxury hotels ▪ meals per itinerary, including gratuities ▪ hotel baggage handling gratuities ▪ deluxe motor coaches and private boat, including driver tips ▪ excursions and entrance fees listed in itinerary

NOT Included: ▪ Airfare from your hometown to Guatemala ▪ Airport baggage handling tips (we recommend 5Qs - or .75 cents per bag) ▪ Any “optional” venues listed as such in itinerary

▪ Alcoholic beverages and tips (10%) for alcoholic beverages ▪ Any Airport Security Taxes ▪ Any expenses incurred should you choose to deviate from the itinerary

Price: \$2290 (Double Occupancy), \$725 (Single Supplement)

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

To direct dial to Guatemala, dial 011 (international operator), then 502 (country code) and then the number you wish to call. Guatemala time is Central Standard Time – however, Daylight Savings Time change is not always in unison with the U.S. If you wish to direct dial from Guatemala you must dial 001 and then the area code + the number.

Explore Guatemala cell phone

In Guatemala:

Anita or John Tel. 5550-4386
www.exploreguatemala.com

Antigua: 3/27– 3/31

Casa Santo Domingo
Tel. 7820-1220

www.casasantodomingo.com.gt/

Chichicastenango: 3/31 – 4/1

Mayan Inn
Tel: 7756-1176

<http://www.mayaninn.com.gt/>

Lake Atitlán: 4/1 – 4/4

Hotel Atitlán
Tel: 7762-1441 / Fax 7762-0048
www.hotelatitlan.com

In Guatemala City: 4/4 – 4/5

Hotel Vista Real
Tel: 2420-7720

<http://www.vistareal.com>

**If, for any reason, the party traveling misses their flight to
Guatemala, please contact:
Explore Guatemala's cell – 011-502-5550-4396
or, the first night's hotel, front desk.**