



Honduras

504 / POP 8.45 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ D&D Brewery (p373)
- ➔ La Hamaca (p375)
- ➔ Buena Onda (p413)
- ➔ La Casa de Café (p381)
- ➔ Hotel Guancascos (p390)

Best Bars

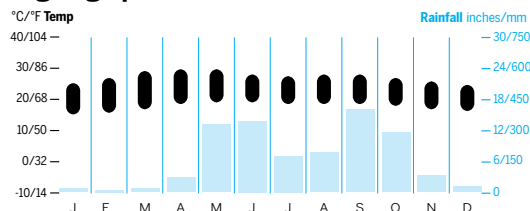
- ➔ Sol de Copán (p382)
- ➔ Tito Aguacate (p365)
- ➔ Kandil (p391)
- ➔ Babalu (p422)
- ➔ Skid Row (p422)

Why Go?

You've probably heard about the bad boy in the Central American 'hood. Even if you've just glanced at a headline, Honduras and trouble seem inextricably linked. But what's the reality on the ground? Well, despite the country's rep, the vast majority of travelers actually love their time here, for the nation is simply loaded with attractions: the fabled Bay Islands (a dive and party mecca), magical Maya ruins of Copán, seductive beauty of the Lenca highlands, wildlife-rich jungle reserves in La Moskitia. It's also superb value for money: all the adventure sports that have put Costa Rica on the map are available here at backpacking rates. Honduran landscapes are extraordinary, its cultural sights compelling and its people waiting. Sure, take a little extra care, especially in the big cities... but make the move and discover Honduras for yourself.

When to Go

Tegucigalpa



Oct–Feb Rainy season on the north coast and islands but dry in the interior.

Mar–Apr Hot and dry everywhere, with temperatures soaring inland.

Jun–Sep Peak season for viewing whale sharks in Utila.

AT A GLANCE

Currency Lempira (L)

Language Spanish
(and some English)

Money ATMs are
widespread

Visas Free on arrival
for most nationalities

Time GMT minus six
hours

Fast Facts

- **Area** 112,090 sq km
- **Capital** Tegucigalpa
- **Emergency** ☎199

Set Your Budget

- **Hostel bed** L95 to L285
- **Evening meal** L57 to L342
- **One-hour local bus trip** L19 to L133

Resources

- **Honduras Tips** www.hondurastips.hn
- **Honduras Weekly** www.hondurasweekly.com
- **Honduras** www.honduras.com
- **Bay Islands Voice** www.bayislandsvoice.com

Connections

Border crossings include Corinto and El Florido (Guatemala), El Amatillo and El Poy (El Salvador), and Guasaule and Las Manos (Nicaragua). There's a weekly ferry to Belize from Puerto Cortés. For more detailed information, see Survival Guide on p436.

FIRST TIME IN HONDURAS

This itinerary should take about two weeks. Entering Honduras at the El Florido border, you'll hit a key attraction immediately: the stunning ruins of **Copán**. Budget at least a couple of days in the area, taking in the temples and surrounding sights before making a short hop west to the atmospheric highland town of **Gracias**, with its hot springs and Lencan villages.

Then it's a long day on the road to the coastal city of **La Ceiba**. Set sail from here for either **Roatán** or **Utila** and indulge in some serious beach and reef time, snorkeling, diving and living the dream.

Back on the mainland, sign up for a rafting trip down the exquisite **Río Cangrejal**, then it's south to **Lago de Yojoa** for an artisan brew or two, hiking and boat trips.

Finish off with a night in either colonial, tranquil **Comayagua** or the bustling capital of **Tegucigalpa**.

Essential Food & Drink

➤ **Where to Eat** To keep costs down head to *comedores* (simple eateries) where a two- or three-course meal is virtually certain to be under US\$3. Buy snacks from *panaderías* (bakeries) and markets. Cafes and restaurants in tourist towns have plenty of international dishes on their menus, including vegetarian choices.

➤ **What to Eat & Drink** Be sure to try Honduras' national dish, the *baleada* (a wrap-style flatbread stuffed with myriad fillings, usually including refried beans and salad) available from street vendors for US\$1 to US\$2. You'll find great grilled meats in the country's interior including lots of *pinchos* (kebabs). On the coast, seafood is superb: *tapado* is a legendary Garifuna fish soup prepared with coconut and spices; in the Bay Islands *bando* is a similar dish. Fresh juices are ubiquitous in Honduras and usually excellent and affordable. Espresso coffee bars are found in all main towns.