



Granada

POP 123,000 / ELEV 40M

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tercer Ojo (p98)
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- ➔ Encuentros (p99)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Hotel Con Corazón (p96)
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- ➔ Hotel Los Patios (p96)

Why Go?

Granada drips with photogenic elegance, a picture postcard at every turn. It's no wonder many travelers use the city as a base, spending at least a day bopping along cobblestone roads from church to church in the city center, then venturing out into the countryside for trips to nearby attractions.

Just out of town half-day adventures take you to an evocative archipelago waterworld at Las Isletas and fun beaches at the Peninsula de Asese. Volcán Mombacho has walking trails, a canopy tour and a butterfly sanctuary, not to mention a few hot springs dotted around its foothills.

Culturally curious travelers may consider a trip to community-tourism operations in nearby villages like Nicaragua Libre, or out to Parque Nacional Archipiélago Zapatera, home to one of the most impressive collections of petroglyphs and statues in the country. Also worth your time is a trip to Reserva Silvestre Privada Domitila, a dry tropical forest home to birds, monkeys and butterflies.

When to Go

November 28 to December 7 is the celebration of La Inmaculada Concepción, or Purísimas as it is known in Nicaragua. It is celebrated throughout the country, but is especially vibrant in Granada, with parades, dances and, yes, plenty of fireworks.

During February the international poetry festival brings bards and wannabes from across Latin America to celebrate the word and wax poetic. Expect a city of magic surrealism with just a touch of pretension.

The December to May high season brings more people, higher prices and better weather. Book at least a week in advance during these times, especially during Christmas and Easter weeks, and during the mid-August festivals.



Granada Highlights

- 1 Cruise the narrow waterways of **Las Isletas** (p88), where luxury holiday mansions cast shadows on humble fishing shacks
- 2 Giddy-up on a horse-drawn **Granada city tour** (p92)
- 3 Feast on some of Nicaragua's most innovative

cuisine in Granada's **restaurants** (p97)

- 4 Shift down a few gears and visit small villages offering community-based tourism, such as **La Granadilla** (p103)
- 5 Bike out along the **Península de Asese** (p97) to secluded swimming beaches

- 6 Hike below the imposing summit of **Volcán Mombacho** (p102)

- 7 Dig the petroglyphs at **Parque Nacional Archipiélago Zapatera** (p104)