



Granada

POP 123,000 / ELEV 40M

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ The Garden Café (p92)
- ➔ El Tercer Ojo (p93)
- ➔ El Pizzaiol (p93)
- ➔ Café de los Sueños (p93)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Hotel Gran Francia (p91)
- ➔ Hotel Con Corazón (p91)
- ➔ Hotel Los Patios (p92)
- ➔ Mansión de Chocolate (p92)
- ➔ San Simian Eco Lodge (p100)

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 Península de Asese. Volcán Mombacho has walking trails and a butterfly sanctuary, not to mention a few hot springs dotted around its foothills. The Laguna de Apoyo is another must-see: its clear turquoise waters and laid-back waterfront lodges offer a splendid natural respite.

Culturally curious travelers might consider a trip to community-tourism operations in nearby villages such as Nicaragua Libre, or out to Parque Nacional Archipiélago Zapatera, home to one of the most impressive collections of petroglyphs and statues in the country.

When to Go

➔ November 28 to December 7 is the celebration of La Inmaculada Concepción, or La Purísima 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 Iglesia La Merced** (p84) Catching a stunning sunset over the lake from the bell tower.
- 2 Laguna de Apoyo** (p99) Taking a dip in this gorgeous volcanic lake.
- 3 Las Isletas** (p97) Cruising the narrow waterways, where luxury holiday mansions

cast shadows on humble fishing shacks.

- 4 Granada City Tour** (p89) Reliving a more romantic past on a horse-drawn city tour.
- 5 Granada's Restaurants** (p92) Feasting on some of Nicaragua's most innovative cuisine.

- 6 Volcán Mombacho** (p97) Hiking below the imposing summit and tasting locally produced coffee.

- 7 Parque Nacional Archipiélago Zapatera** (p100) Checking out the petroglyphs.