

Welcome to Nicaragua

Affable Nicaragua embraces travelers with offerings of volcanic landscapes, colonial architecture, sensational beaches and pristine forests that range from breathtaking to downright incredible.

Beaches

Whether it's dipping your toes into the crystalline Caribbean or paddling out to the crashing waves of the pounding Pacific, Nicaragua's beaches always deliver the goods. The big barrels of Rivas are revered in surfing circles while the clear waters of the Corn Islands are superb for snorkeling. More sedentary beach bums can choose between accessible slices of sand lined with fine restaurants and happening bars, or natural affairs backed by a wall of rainforest. Even the best beaches in the country are refreshingly free of development, so you can experience them as nature intended.

Outdoor Adventures

Looking for the ultimate rush? Nicaragua's diverse geography, intense energy and 'anything goes' attitude is perfect for outdoor adventures. Get ready to check a whole gamut of new experiences off your list including surfing down an active volcano, diving into underwater caves, canoeing through alligator-infested wetlands, swimming across sea channels off your tiny islands, and landing a 90-plus-kg tarpon beneath a Spanish fortress. Nicaragua's great outdoors are relatively untamed – at many key attractions, there are no signs and few crowds – making this so-called 'land of lakes and volcanoes' a fantastic place for an independent adventure.

Colonial Splendor

Nicaragua's colonial splendor comes in two distinct, but equally appealing, flavors. The elegant streetscapes of Granada, Nicaragua's best-preserved colonial town, have been entrancing travelers for centuries with their architectural grace. The town boasts a meticulously restored cathedral, well-groomed plaza and perfectly maintained mansions that shelter lush internal courtyards. Far less polished, working-class León offers a different colonial experience, where 300-year-old houses are interspersed with revolutionary murals, and architectural masterpieces house corner stores. It's a vibrant city that, while proud of its heritage, is too busy to feel like a museum.

Getting Off the Beaten Track

Few destinations have such beauty as Nicaragua, yet remain undeveloped. Drop off the tourist trail and into a world of majestic mountains, cooperative farms, wetlands thronged with wildlife and empty jungle-clad beaches. Rent a 4WD vehicle, if you're up for it – it's the best way to access some of the less-traveled corners of the country, provided you have a good map – and forge onward to discover remote indigenous communities, overgrown pre-Columbian ruins and untouched rainforests. No matter how far you go, you'll always find friendly locals willing to share their culture with strangers.



Why I Love Nicaragua

By Bridget Gleeson, Writer

I didn't get to know Nicaragua by traveling through its landscape. I hardly saw any of the country when I first came here – I was a volunteer at a non-profit organization in Granada. But I learned some things about Nicaraguan culture and the way people are; I learned to love Nicaraguan food and I started reading about the nation's complicated history. All of that has served me well during my travels here. I don't see Nicaragua as a destination to check off a list, but as a thoroughly unique and beautiful place – and one that's increasingly welcoming to travelers.

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