



Final itinerary for
Ian Harris and Jane Wormleighton
6 February 2016
Nicaragua

The Ultimate Travel Company
The Central America Travel Specialists

Ian Harris and Jane Wormleighton

Nicaragua

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Quality of service

We like to think that our success has been built on a simple formula - to deliver a high standard of service before, during and after each holiday, a duty of care and commitment to you, and value for money. We aim to be totally flexible in our approach, as this allows us to create the holiday that you want and one that is easy and enjoyable to plan.

However, if you feel that there are areas in which we could improve our service to you, please do not hesitate to contact either our Managing Director Nick Van Gruisen, or Executive Director Rowan Paterson, on 020 7386 4646. You can also email them:

nick@theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk

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Outline Itinerary

6 Feb	Heathrow / Atlanta / Managua (Los Robles)
7-9 Feb	Leon (El Convento)
10-12 Feb	Granada - Lake Nicaragua (Jicaro Island Ecolodge)
13 – 15 Feb	Mombacho - San Juan del Sur (Morgans Rock)
16 – 22 Feb	Emerald Coast (Mukul Resort)
23 Feb	Managua / Atlanta / London
24 Feb	Arrival London Heathrow

Detailed Itinerary

6 Feb Heathrow / Atlanta / Managua (Los Robles)

Check in at the Virgin/Delta Airlines desk, London Heathrow, Terminal 3.

Depart London Heathrow on flight DL4364 (operated by Virgin)	09.30 hours
Arrive Atlanta	14.25 hours.
Depart Atlanta on flight DL369	18.10 hours
Arrive Managua	20.54 hours

On arrival, you will be met and driven 15-20 minutes to Los Robles Hotel.

Los Robles is a delightful, centrally located, boutique hotel. Attractive ironwork and heavy, dark-wood antiques adorn this colonial house with a hacienda-style front. All this leads to a beautiful leafy garden with splashes of coloured flowers and a trickling fountain. The rooms are big and airy, with hand-crocheted bedspreads and bathrooms which offer revitalising high-pressure hot showers. Lake Managua is just a short walk away as are some of Managua's best restaurants and bars. The hotel also features a business centre with Wi-Fi connection for those who want to keep in touch.



One night at Los Robles in a double room including breakfast

7-9 Feb Leon (El Convento)

This morning you will be collected from Los Robles and taken on a short tour of Managua before being driven two hours north to Leon. En-route you will be taken to visit the ruins of Old Leon (now UNESCO).

El Convento was originally built as a convent in 1639 and is a classically designed building which fell into disrepair in the 1960s and was all but destroyed during the revolution of the 1970s. After the guns fell silent, the ruins of this peaceful sanctuary for meditation and prayer were acquired by a philanthropic family which owns the most complete collection of colonial religious art in Central America. The convent was carefully rebuilt and its interior courtyard was sown with an elegant topiary of tropical plants surrounding a fine fountain. The dark, cool hallways open onto an attractive garden which provides ample space to rest and relax, or perhaps enjoy the café and restaurant serving Nicaraguan and international cuisine. The 32 rooms are simple, spacious and cool, with smooth Spanish tiles and stylish furnishings designed to enhance the historic theme. All are equipped with comfortable king-sized beds, large bathrooms, and conveniences including Wi-Fi and air conditioning.



We recommend visiting the Ortiz–Guardian Foundation's museum nearby, which already occupies two mansions filled with the family's treasures. They have brought some of their most beautiful pieces to the hotel for safekeeping. Weathered santos, the hand–carved effigies of saints that line the naves and transepts of classic Catholic churches; luminous religious paintings collected from Peru, Mexico, and throughout the Americas; marvellously ornate, hand-carved furniture; and more modern work, including a series of light–hearted portraits that juxtapose everyone from Elvis Presley and Yasser Arafat to Princess Diana and Nicaragua's favourite son, Augustino Sandino.

Three nights at El Convento in a Double Room including breakfast

8 Feb Full-day tour of Leon

Enjoy a private guided tour of the colonial city of Leon – for centuries; a political, military, cultural, and religious centre of Nicaragua. The Spanish influence on the city is visible throughout. The streets, classic buildings, churches, and monuments are testaments to the rich history and culture of the region. Many consider the Metropolitan Cathedral the most impressive colonial monument in Central America. Step up to the roof of the cathedral and enjoy an exceptional view over the colonial town and up to the volcano skyline of Nicaragua. The great poet and writer, Ruben Dario, is buried in the Cathedral. Dario reformed the Castilian language and is called the Father of Modern Spanish letters. During our visit, we will see Dario's childhood home, the site of an excellent museum.



After a delicious lunch, a 10 minute drive will take you to the indigenous Sutiava neighbourhood where you can visit the local art school and participate in the elaboration of a carpet in company of some of the students. The carpet is among the most colorful traditions in Leon, and a demonstration of faith in the community, commonly seen on Friday of the Easter week.

At the end of your day, finish the cultural experience with a visit to the House of the “Gigantona” (Giant girl) back in Leon center, usually a hard to miss street dance while you are in Nicaragua – discover the story behind the dance of this large image of a Spanish lady to the beat of the drums.

10-12 Feb Granada - Lake Nicaragua (Jicaró Island Ecolodge)

This morning you depart for Granada. En-route, visit the colourful market town of Masaya and the pretty “white villages” of Catarina and San Juan de Oriente.

Continue to Granada and enjoy a walk around the city, known as the colonial jewel of Central America. Founded in 1524 by Francisco Hernández de Córdoba, it is the oldest continuously occupied city on the American continent. Examples of colonial and neoclassical architecture abound. Visit the most important historical sites, its streets, homes, churches, museums and other attractions will be recalled through the years.



Your English-speaking guide will show you the cathedral of Granada, La Casa de los Tres Mundos, El Convento San Francisco, and the churches La Merced and Xalteva and other important building. The trip is excellent for lovers of history, colonial architecture, and for those who wish for a peek into the past.



Later in the afternoon, you will have a short transfer to Asse pier, where you will embark on a shared 15-minute boat journey to Jicaró Eco-Lodge.

Jicaro Island Ecolodge opened in early 2010 with high sustainability credentials. Located on a private island in Lake Nicaragua, Jicaro Island Ecolodge is just a short boat ride from the colonial town of Granada with spectacular views of the Mombacho Volcano across the lake.



Accommodation is provided in nine private casitas, all with lake views and just a short walk from the pool, restaurant and wellness centre. The two-storey casitas have a private bedroom with king size bed on the first floor; on the ground floor, a spacious living area connects to an outside deck where an oversized hammock invites you to relax and enjoy the peace of the lake. Each casita is equipped with mosquito netting and ceiling fans as well as large doors and windows for cross ventilation.

Activities are as active or inactive as you desire, ranging from a tour of nearby Granada city to hiking, kayaking or bird watching and you might like to end an adventurous day with a romantic dinner for two on a floating deck or a dip in the infinity pool. There is also a busy wellness centre at the lodge where yoga sessions are provided as well as a variety of massage and other wellness treatments.

It is also nice to do a boat tour of the islands in Lake Nicaragua (bookable locally at additional cost).



Three nights at Jicaro Island Ecolodge in a Casita on a Full Board Basis

[13 – 15 Feb](#) [Mombacho - San Juan del Sur \(Morgans Rock\)](#)

This morning return to Asse Pier from where you depart for Mombacho National Park. The cloud forest which contains a splendid diversity of flora and fauna, with species unique to the region, is at 1,344 meters above sea level. At 60 meters above sea level, begin the leisurely trip in an “eco-mobile” up to 1,100 meters. Along the way, observe more than 80 varieties of orchids, many unique to the region. At the summit, you should have a marvellous panoramic view of Lake Nicaragua and its islets; produced by an eruption. The maximum altitude during this visit will be about 1,200 meters above sea level.

Continue to San Juan del Sur. Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge is located 11 miles north of San Juan del Sur. It is architecturally stunning offering both luxury and environmentally friendly accommodation. Named after a US Senator who had nominated Nicaragua as the route for the trans-oceanic canal (which was eventually built in Panama), the hotel, made up of 15 bungalows, is located in a tropical rainforest on a curving hillside with picturesque views through tree canopies to the mile-long stretch of virgin beach.

The bungalows sit on a cliff overlooking the private bay and estuary each featuring a king size bed, a comfortable sofa bed and private deck. The bungalows are connected to the main lodge by an impressive 100-metre suspension bridge crossing a forested canyon.



There is plenty to do at the hotel from nature walks to longer explorations or fishing trips. However you may prefer to relax by the chlorine-free infinity pool or on one of the sun loungers on the white, sandy beach. The tropical forest that surrounds the hotel is rich with wildlife such as spider monkeys, capuchins, armadillos, sloths and opossums, as well as dozens of bird species and seasonally (August to January), giant leatherback turtles who come to the beach to lay their eggs.

Environmental initiatives implemented by the hotel include the planting of almost two million trees, solar heating panels, redistribution of waste-water for irrigation and usage of locally farmed and grown produce including coffee, sugar and vegetables.

The activities that can be booked at Morgan's Rock are:

- 1.-Breakfast at the Farm**
- 2.-Horseback Riding**
- 3.-Sunset Tour**
- 4.-Night Walk**
- 5.-Jungle Walk**
- 6.-Property Tour**

Additional costs apply for these tours.

Three nights at Morgans Rock in an Ocean View Cabana including breakfast

16 – 22 Feb Emerald Coast (Mukul Resort)

This morning you will be transferred by boat to Mukul Resort (the boat transfer is approx. 30 minutes)

The Mukul Resort is a stunning hotel in the beautiful and unspoiled Rivas region of the Emerald Coast of Nicaragua. By far the most luxurious resort around, it stretches over a vast 4km of coastline and opens onto a white sanded beach in a beautiful clear water bay. The resort also offers a beautifully relaxing spa, access to the nearby golf club, nature walks, island boat trips, watersports, yoga, snorkelling and even rum tasting sessions.



Designed in a Nicaraguan artisan style, each of the 37 guestrooms has open walls, their own private terrace and plunge pool and is decorated in stylish cream colours with teak wood furnishings. The Beach Villas look onto the Playa Manzanillo and have a kitchen and separate living room, double size bathrooms have luxury amenities and soaking tubs. The Bohio's are placed 300ft above the beach, nestled like treehouses, so you feel like you are hovering over the sand. The verandas have day beds and the marbled bathrooms have a separate wet room and double headed shower. The crown jewel of the resort, the Casona Don Carlos private residence has six bedroom suites and a large infinity pool overlooking the beach.

The property is just a 2.5 hour drive south of Managua Airport, but for those looking to cut down on the journey time, why not embark on a 25-minute private helicopter ride, soaring over the Emerald Coast's dynamic and unforgettable landscape.

Seven nights at the Mukul Resort in Premium Ocean View Bohio 9, including breakfast.

23 Feb Managua / Atlanta / London

This morning you will be transferred to Managua airport. Check in at the Delta Airlines desk.

Depart Managua on flight DL370 08.35 hours

Arrive Atlanta 13.15 hours

Depart Atlanta on flight DL4365 (operated by Virgin) 17.45 hours

24 Feb Arrival London Heathrow

Arrive London Heathrow (T3) 06.50 hours

General Information

Climate/clothing

Nicaragua has a very similar climate to Costa Rica with two seasons - the rainy season or 'winter' (June to November) and the dry season or 'summer' (December to May). Temperatures average between 25-30°C throughout the year but they are substantially cooler in the cloud forest regions.

Plan to dress in layers. Sweater and jacket are needed for activities in the mountains and cool evenings. Shorts are worn for walking or at the beaches but never in the cities where smart / casual clothing is usual. Bring rain gear for the cloud forest and rainforest regions – a small folded umbrella often comes in useful, however most lodges and camps have rain ponchos and rubber boots for free use should it rain.

Charity donation policy

Please note that we add £10 per person to all our confirmation invoices. This is a voluntary contribution towards our charity donation initiative that we pledge to match. Further details are provided on booking.

Health

For medical advice please consult your GP or visit the following website:-

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations.aspx>

Luggage

There is a luggage allowance of 12kg total per person on flights in Nicaragua that is strictly enforced.

We strongly recommend that you carry overnight essentials and any prescribed medication in your hand luggage on international flights, particularly if connecting to an onward destination.

Tipping

In Nicaragua tipping is always at your personal discretion. When a good quality restaurant doesn't add a service charge to your bill but we would suggest 10%. For chambermaids and porters we suggest US\$2/US\$1. For a day tour we would suggest US\$10 for the guide and US\$5 for the driver, (equivalent in local currency). For taxis we suggest just rounding up the fare.

Time

Nicaragua is 6 hours behind GMT.

Visas/passports

Visas are not required to enter Nicaragua but you need a Tourist Card which currently costs \$10 per person and is available on entry. Your passport should have a minimum validity of six months remaining as this is an immigration requirement for many countries and airlines.

FCO Advice

Travel advice issued by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office can be viewed at www.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo

Plugs

Information on the Type A North American/Japanese 2-blade Electrical Adapter Plug and Electrical Outlet

The Type A electrical plug, or flat blade attachment plug, uses two flat parallel pins or blades. It is found in most of North America and on the east coast of South America on smaller devices that do not require a ground connection.



Contact Information

Please find below contact details of the ground handlers who will be looking after you during your stay and who have made local arrangements and hotel bookings for you. There also follows a list of the properties where you will be staying with the relevant dates shown.

In case of emergency, please contact our local ground handlers who will be able to assist on the spot. We also have an out of hours contact here in the UK should you require it:

The Ultimate Travel Company out of office hours emergency contact – 0203 394 9591. This service is available from 5.30pm - 9am Monday to Friday (UK time) and at weekends.

Our local agents will be able to deal with most situations or problems that may arise, so please only use this service if you are unable to resolve the matter locally.

If you need to call us during office hours, please do so on 020 7386 4646.

Local Agents

Nicaragua - Viaventure

Contact: Allan Morales

Tel: (506) 8321 8228 / (506) 2440-0386

allan.morales@viaventure.com

Emergency Number (24hrs): (506) 7102-7707

Hotels

Los Robles

(6-7 February)

Frente Del Restaurante La Marseillaise,

30 mts al sur,

Los Robles,

Managua

Tel: (505) 267-3008

Fax (505) 270-1074

www.hotellosrobles.com

Hotel El Convento

(7-9 February)

Del Parque Central,

2 Cuadras Al Oeste,

León,

Nicaragua

Tel: 505-2311-7053

www.hotelesconvento.com.ni

Jicaro Eco Lodge
Jicaro Island, Granada
Tel: (505) 2558-7702
www.jicarolodge.com

(10-12 February)

Morgan's Rock
Ocotal Beach, Pacific Ocean
Tel: (505) 2254-7989
www.morgansrock.com

(13-15 February)

Mukul Resort
Km 10, Tola, Las Salinas - Playa Manzanillo
Guacalito de La Isla
Nicaragua
Tel: +505 2563 7100
www.mukulresort.com/

(16 – 23 February)