

The Postcard Dream

Central America -FREE Itinerary-



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5-Week Central America Route

A free itinerary to help you plan the trip of a lifetime

Intro

Central America is one of the most underrated travel regions in the world – think volcano hikes, jungle ruins, island life, and wildlife... all packed into a relatively small area.

We spent 5 weeks travelling this exact route, designed to balance the highlights with realistic travel times – and avoid some of the common mistakes people make when planning this trip.



Highlights

- Belize Barrier Reef & Great Blue Hole
- Volcán de Fuego overnight experience
- Tikal & Copán Mayan ruins
- Cerro Negro volcano boarding
- Costa Rica wildlife & cloud forests
- San Blas Islands escape

Route Direction

North → South (Belize to Panama for the most efficient flow)

Best Time to Visit

December → April (dry season, best conditions)

May & November (shoulder season, fewer crowds)

June → October (wetter, but manageable with flexibility)

The Route

Days 1–4: Caye Caulker, Belize

- Laid-back Caribbean island life (“Go Slow” vibe)
- Snorkel the Belize Barrier Reef
- Optional: Great Blue Hole – if budget allows, fly over it (far better than the long boat trip)

Getting there:

- Belize Express Water Taxi from Belize City
- Or boat from Chetumal (Mexico)



Days 5–10: Guatemala

- Flores (2 days) → Gateway to Tikal
- Do both sunrise & sunset if you can completely different experiences
- Antigua (3 days) → Base for the Acatenango / Volcán de Fuego overnight hike
- Lake Atitlán (2 days) → Volcano lake surrounded by traditional villages

Getting there:

- Overland bus from Belize City → Flores (cheap + easy)
- Overnight bus from Flores → Guatemala city (cheap + easy) - theres also a flight alternative if your budget allows.

Check out our [Guatemala Guide](#) for exactly how to book these transfers & hikes



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Days 11–12: Honduras

- Visit Copán Ruinas – ancient Mayan ruins with scarlet macaws flying overhead
- Visa rules for UK travellers have recently changed – check before crossing

Getting there:

- Enter via the El Florido border (Guatemala ↔ Honduras) – a straightforward crossing that puts you just 20 minutes from Copán



Days 13–14: El Salvador

- Suchitoto → One of the most insightful stops of the trip
- Learn about El Salvador's recent history and cultural identity

Getting there:

- Best accessed back through Guatemala, crossing at San Cristóbal for a smoother, more efficient route into Suchitoto.



Days 15–21: Nicaragua

- León → Volcano boarding down Cerro Negro
- Ometepe Island → Formed by two volcanoes in Lake Nicaragua
- Granada (optional stop) → Colourful streets + island boat trips

Getting there:

- Many travellers go overland, but we took the boat route from El Salvador via the Gulf of Fonseca, avoiding a long land transfer through southern Honduras



Days 22–29: Costa Rica

- La Fortuna (Arenal) → Volcano hikes + wildlife
- Monteverde → Cloud forest, waterfalls, sloths

Coast

- → Caribbean: Tortuguero (wildlife + canals)
- → Pacific: Manuel Antonio (beaches + national park)

Getting Around: Hire a car to best see the amazing places Costa Rica has to offer

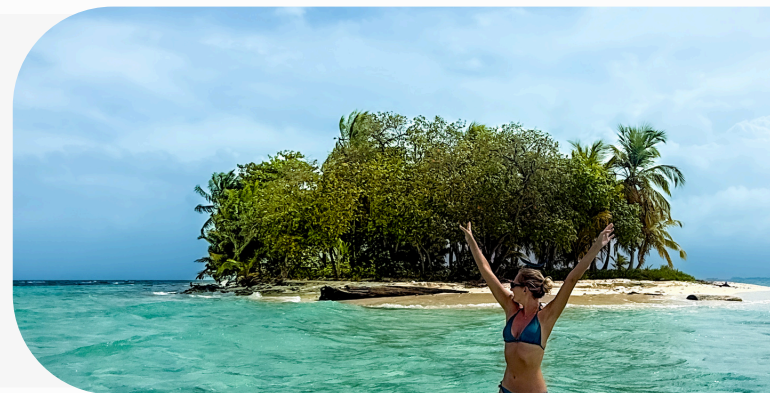


Days 30–35: Panama

- Panama City → Old town + rooftop bars + Panama Canal (watch ships transit)
- San Blas Islands (3D/2N) → Remote Caribbean islands, no WiFi, unforgettable end to the trip

Getting there:

- Flying San Jose > Panama City is the most efficient route and not too expensive



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Things to know before you go:

Some of the best experiences are weather dependent – Fuego and Caye Caulker snorkelling particularly. Build in extras days.

San Blas is cash only – no ATMs, no card payments so bring enough USD for your entire stay.

Border crossings can take longer than expected – even short journeys can turn into 1-3 hour waits.

Costa Rica will shock your budget – expect to pay 2-3x more than Guatemala or Nicaragua.

Signal isn't always reliable – especially on islands and remote areas. Choose a reliable eSIM and download maps in advance.

Book experiences first, not accommodation – key things like Fuego & San Blas can fill up, but places to stay are easy to find.

Planning This Trip Properly

This route works best when it's planned *well* – small tweaks can make a big difference to:

- Travel time
- Cost
- Experience quality

Want Help Planning Your Trip?

This is exactly what we help with. We can:

- Build your full itinerary
- Recommend the best tours & experiences
- Help you avoid common mistakes
- Access trusted providers & discounts

Message us @thepostcarddream with “Central America” and we'll help you plan

Bonus

Thanks for reading this far, as a gift here's a list of the best tried discount codes for Central America we used:

Best e-SIM for Latin America: **HOLAFLY** – use **THEPOSTCARDREAM** at checkout for 5% off

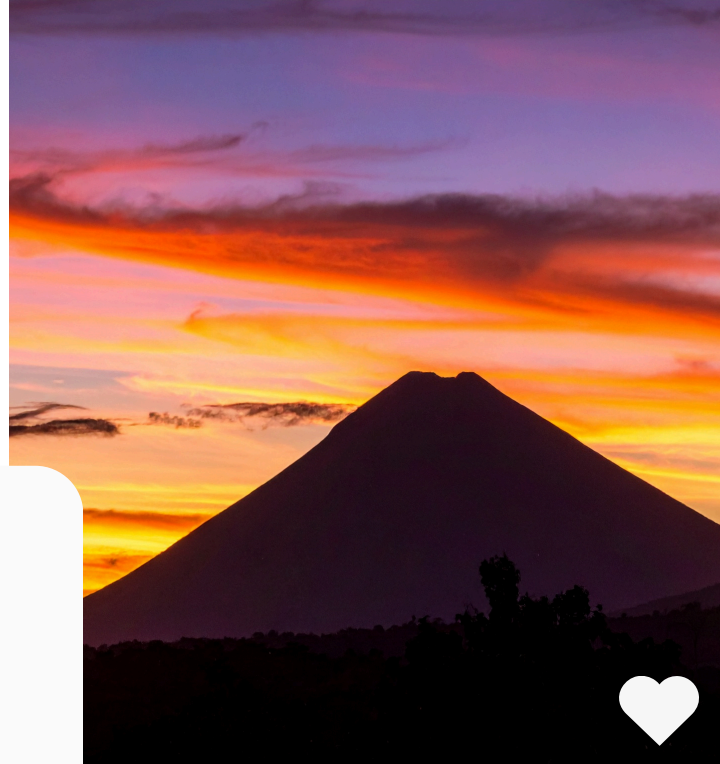
Best service for booking activities: **GetYourGuide** – use **THEPOSTCARDREAM5** for 5% off any activity. Don't forget to check out our [Guatemala Guide](#) for our top recommended tours and activities

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Highlights

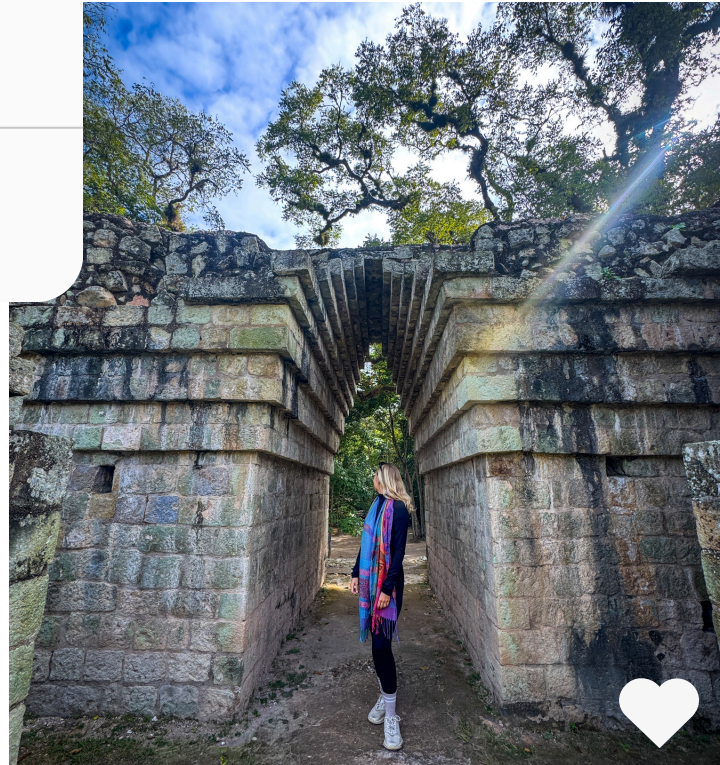
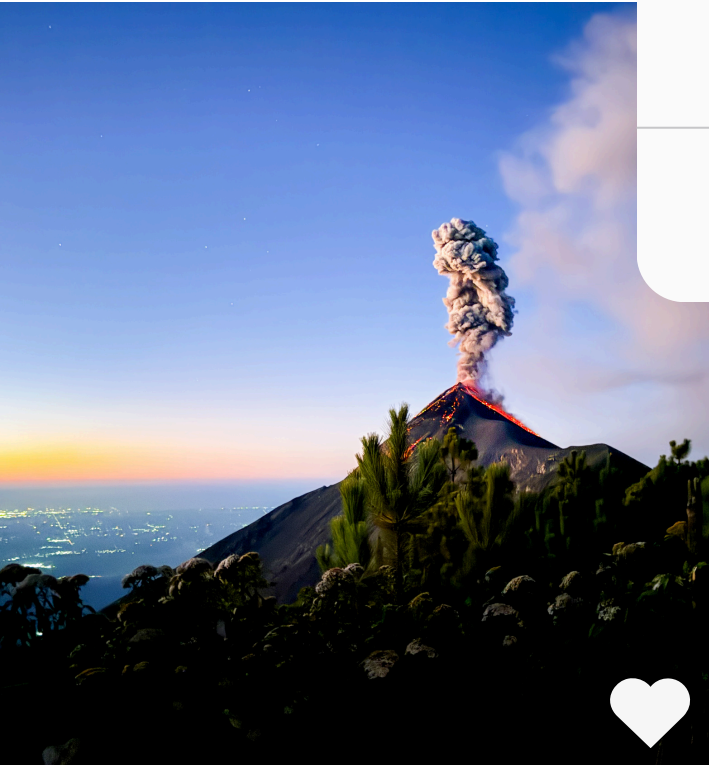
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Your Central America Adventure



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Your Adventure Awaits!

Any questions please reach out

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