



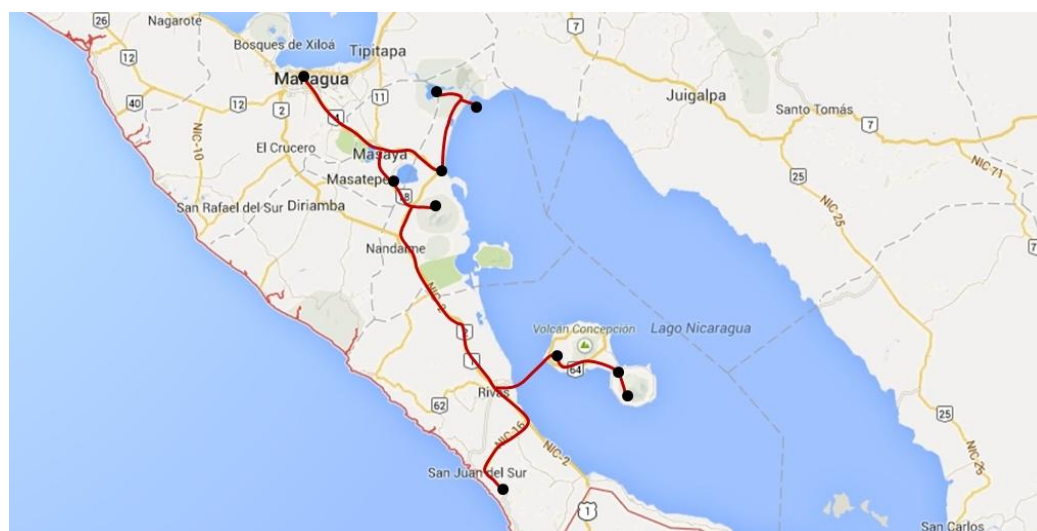
## From Swamps to Beaches & Volcanoes



Verified as meeting  
Rainforest Alliance  
sustainable tourism  
requirements

13 Days (15 UK/UK) (Ref#LNI-HR-010)

*From a Colonial City, through wetlands, savannahs, beaches and volcanoes, bordering ocean and lakes, ride in the footsteps of the New World daring Conquistadores...*



**Day to Day Program – ENGLISH VERSION**

***D1: Arrival in Managua, transfer to Granada, the colonial jewel since 1524.***

At your arrival in Managua. Transfer to Granada, the ancient capital during the colonial times. Dinner not included.

*Note: Night: colonial style hotel, Transfer: 1h00,*

### ***D2: Ranch "La Gloria" – Llano – Cocibolca Lake - Island of the rafts – (Tisma Lagoon Natural Reserve)***

After our guide's briefing we left the charming city of Granada, with its touch of small baths and big colonial city that was, in way to our riding adventure, to reach an old farm "El Llano", in the limit of a spiny savannah and a swamp. We choose our horses (Creoles, the most obedient of Nicaragua), for three days of riding in the natural park of Tisma. Three days, in which we move through a flat landscape, Lake beaches, sandy islets, rangeland and swamps, wild and thorny sunburned savannahs contrasting with the ornithological paradise of swamp with lilies and aquatic plants. Note that no horse riding tours and much less accustomed to tourists rides in row. You will have the opportunity to experience a real working tool, a horse need for livestock, easy malleability and subtle answer, by the daily work masterkeying. Crossing the swamp, we arrive at Cocibolca Lake and its long sandy beach that allows us to enjoy various gallops. After lunch at the house of a fisherman, and a swim in the lake with our horses, we resume the ride to north along the beach (12 km). We arrived at the village where we will go to an island to install our tents. Depending on the height of the water, we arrive to the island on horse or swimming beside them possibly, or even by boat. On the sandy beach, above freshwater sea whipped by winds, follow us caracaras and vultures roaming the sky and sand, in search of food. In the afternoon discovery of a biotope particularly rich in birds, in a fisherman boat through the lagoon. Dinner at the camp or at village, chowder.

*Note: Night: overnight in tents of 3 for 2 people. In horse: 5 hours – 17 kms, dip in the lake without special supervision, but no danger, boat trip for birdwatching about 2 hours.*

### ***D3: Bird Watching In El Paso - Towards the farmhouse, learning farming practices.***

6:00 Breakfast at the island. Dismantling of tents (7:30-8am). By boat to El Paso, we observe waterfowl, very active at dawn. We found our horses for a ride to Tisma (9:30 a 12:30) about 15 km through "El Llano", in a mixture of spiny savanna and flooded plains. Back to the cattle ranch, where we have lunch. We set up our camp in the huge old building's balconies. In the afternoon we ride a horse searching cattle, returning at night to the farm, imitating workers to herd the cattle (15H-16H30). This estate is one of the few operating with a 19th century infrastructure using traditional farming techniques (only large areas of natural pastures, unfenced, cows are herded, not all of them spend the night at the ranch, births occur in the meadow...).

*Note: Night: diner and night at ranch balconies, traditional beds with mat. Transfer: 15 a 20km, Horse Riding: 15 to 20 km, 5 hours riding and herding*

### ***D4: Galloping towards Granada***

(Before sunrise: Possibility to participate in hand-milking cows, 3-4am for those who have the courage)

6 a.m. Traditional Breakfast. We take the horses to leave the farm and visiting different landscapes around. In a Detour we reach the lake galloping and then to south through paths often sandy where we can gallop in the shade of trees. We continue along an old railway line which finally brings us to the old Granada Steam Railway. We arrived at the lake for lunch and horse back to the vicinity of the old quarters of the city. This is where we have to lay off our horses, unfortunately. Wishing them happiness in their work with livestock. (Since they've never left the farm where they

born, unshod, also are fearful and inadequate in another habitat, and some cannot eat anything other than their wild herbs). We take a microbus. After passing through the city of Masaya and installing at Hotel, we reach Masaya Volcano. Visiting volcanology center, the crater spewing hundreds of tons of gas per day, pre Columbian site of human sacrifice, various panoramic views, and a lava tunnel. (Masaya Volcano Tour 15h30-20h).

*Note: Night: Dinner and overnight in a simple hotel at Masaya, horse riding: 6h00 / 24km*

#### ***D5: Masaya, Dressage Horse, dance steps or equestrian festival***

7:00 Breakfast at hotel. Discovering saddlers' artisans' art, guitar manufacturers in neighborhoods. We also found markets in Masaya, its historic center and its magnificent cathedral colonial, with the presence of horses still useful, they are everywhere in the city, pulling carriages and wagons and even "routes" passenger bus. Aperitif and lunch in Masaya Central Park. Reserve evening to a cultural equestrian event in a village fete around Masaya or if no match dates, visit to a horse barn (stud farm) for demonstration of dressage (dance steps of a horse!) Nicaragua has a long tradition, since there is no celebration without parades on horseback where all high society can parade as jockeys, both daughters of marriageable age as remarkable, all eager to show all possible Spanish blood... (The social significance of these events is based in the colonial past, of course...).

*Note: Night: Dinner and overnight at Masatepe town*

#### ***D6: White Towns, Equestrian Ride in Middle of rustic farms.***

7:00 Breakfast. We take rested horses, creoles (always docile, but more versatile) the view of the Masaya volcano and its lagoon. Ride to the plateau of White Villages through a bucolic landscape, shaded walkways, craft villages and scattered settlements, for 18 miles to the village of horticulturists, Catarina. We take all day to do this, as we are tempted to visit and photograph the craft workshops and their families along roads and some exotic birds that can surprise us. Lunch in route at a local restaurant. In Catarina, visit to gardens, flowery streets, and viewpoint to crater and the blue water lagoon Apoyo, meeting potters of San Juan de Oriente, a neighboring village. Then we take the top edge of the crater and finally went down to the shore of Apoyo lagoon (7km), through a dry tropical forest, protected, (falling leaves in the dry season). Upon reaching the edge of the lagoon, we take advantage of the water and the site (6 km in diameter): appetizer, day or moonlight swimming, in the blue and warm waters of the crater, barbecue, guitar under the stars on the beach of pumice stones...

*Note: Night: in straw huts in the crater, Transfer: , Horse Riding 25 km*

#### ***D7: Ride to Mombacho and Altitude cloud forest***

Saddled our horses for the day. We arrive at the foot of Volcano Mombacho to 17 km. First we take the steep path that will allow us to leave the crater to reach the Diriomo viewpoint. At Diriomo village we visit the old colonial style church. Next ride to a farm by shaded paths and scattered villages, where we have a typical lunch. We continue riding after lunch until we reach the entrance of the Mombacho volcano (4km). 4x4 transportation leads to the summit. Walking in altitude (1.500 m) in a forest "of clouds" (cloud forest) around the crater.

8:00 p.m night tour led by a local guide to observe endemic species (unique in the world and are limited to the top of the volcano!) Accommodation in dormitory style shelter.

*Note: Night: Dinner at the shelter of the rangers of Mombacho Volcano , Transfer: , Walking:*

### ***D8: From Volcano to the Pacific Ocean***

7:00 Breakfast and transfer back in 4x4 at 9:30 -- 10:00 Ride in the middle of coffee and cocoa plantations, meeting of a group of women farmers that lets us know some of hers daily activities. Lunch at a farm. Departure by minibus to the Pacific coast. We visit the fishing village of San Juan del Sur before we meet the horses that will take us for 2 days. Mounted, go to Wildlife Refuge La Flor, where we arrived after 2h30 walking or trotting through the tropical dry forest. On the beach, we can swim in the wild and protected area. It is one of the world's seven beaches where sea turtles Pasmala come massively to spawn in the sand at certain times of year. (Spawning season: July to December and hatching season from August to January). Depending on the date of your trip, whether or not there is likelihood to watch this natural show, always worth trying your luck and enjoy the wait in this magical place. Dinner at Ostional where Mrs. Mirella or at the ranger station. Overnight in tents ( or on the beach watching the stars for those who wish) to enjoy more the experience in the arms of Mother Nature, and take advantage of opportunities to see the turtles at night ( rangers wake us if a turtle is coming)

*Note: Night: in tents, Horse riding: around 10 km in morning and 15 km in afternoon.*

### ***D9: The Congo Monkey Forest and coastal inlets carved by the winds of the South Pacific.***

6:00 Transfer and breakfast at family lodging "El Mono Amigo" where we saddled. 7:30 am Riding out towards the village "Los Tortuguillos" by a semi-humid tropical forest, populated by bands of howler monkeys. Visit on the way of a mysterious pre-Columbian site. Picnic at Los Manzanillos beach, oceanfront, at the bottom of the wild creek. Possible bath without supervision. A local guide will lead us along the rugged coastline, reaching back La Flor refuge by rocky coves and small beaches (land round or sharp stones, walking shoes needed). Previously, with our guide, learn all the behaviors and attitudes necessary to respect all life in littoral coastal, one of the most narrow and fragile planet and to be protected much more than what is generally believed. Walking around 2 or 3 hours from the coast (seabirds, pelicans, frigate birds and eagles). At ranger's station, we found again our horses to gallop back to the hostel that was our starting point in the morning

#### **Participants of the 15-day itinerary**

Dinner and overnight at lodge, near San Juan del Sur.

*Note: Horse Riding 4 to 5 hours, 20 km*

### ***D10: Ometepe - Canopy Tour, Ojo de Agua and Magdalena Petroglyphs***

Transfer to the port of San Jorge. One hour to reach by ferry to the island of Ometepe, where we will spend two days. In the port of San Jose we'll find another horse. Starting the journey on horseback through the volcanic island. Soon we stop for a "canopy" tour, zip from tree to tree, facing the view of the lake and the Concepción volcano that dominates the island. Follow the horseback ride to a popular bathing spot (Ojo de agua, local resort with clear water). We continued along the sandy beach of Santo Domingo to reach the farm Magdalena, managed by a cooperative of 30 peasant families, we will visit on a trail in the woods, a site of pre-Columbian petroglyphs, and these enigmatic engravings on rocks that defined sacred spaces and / or pointed deeds



and characters to remember. We continue riding to the farm El Porvenir.

*Note: Night: Diner and Lodge, Horse Riding: 25 km*

### ***D11: Istian River and San Ramon Waterfall, Ometepe Island.***

Morning departure by horse from the farm. After a few kilometers, we embarked in small kayaks to explore the small and muddy Istian River, bordered by lush vegetation. Then we go to a new hostel for lunch. Always riding we rise on Maderas, volcano's flank to reach San Ramón Waterfall. Delicious natural bath for those who like fresh water. We go down for dinner and overnight at the lodge in the old farmhouse.

*Note: Riding and walking all day with different tours, 15 kilometers total.*

### ***D12: Great ride around the Madera Volcano.***

Mounted for the last day and not less important, we turn to the island, bordering the slopes of volcanoes and beaches of Lake. We return to Santo Domingo for the ferry that takes us to Rivas. Once on land, we go to Granada city. Dinner in the pedestrian street and night at the charming Hotel Colonial.

**Price per 12 days \$ 1800 + Extension + \$ 753. Total price \$ 2553**

*Note: Night: at colonial hotel, Transfer: 1h30, Horse riding: 25 kilometers*

### ***D13: Granada - City Tour - Granada Islets***

As 3 or 4 centuries ago, we are in Granada, jewel of colonial architecture, in the process of being listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The market of fruit, vegetables and spices, colonial churches and narrow colonial streets, ride in old horse-drawn carriages or by bike to visit some distant points (the old train station, a shoe factory, pure factory and to the cemetery). During lunch we visit a restaurant and a little peculiar hammocks workshop. Lunch is served by young deaf... opportunity to learn some basic signs of this language. In the afternoon, visit the islands of the archipelago of Granada, slowly sailing in a small boat or kayak among hundreds of islets to go for a last swim of the sun in a haven of greenery and water. Dinner in the pedestrian street and night at the Hotel Colonial.

*Note: Night: at colonial hotel, Transfer:,*

### ***D14: Departure on Plane***

Transfer to airport.

### ***D15: Arriving in Europe***

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**INCLUDED: TOTAL 10 riding days and 2 days to visit Granada and Masaya**  
Bilingual guide, Tours, Transport, Accommodation and Food, all included apart from the first meal, all the drinks, tips.

Minimum: people

Rate per person **US\$ 2553**