



Guatemala Bike & Discovery Tour

an 11 day Guatemala Bicycle Tour

Day by Day Itinerary:

Day 1

Valley Ride Exploring the colonias around Antigua 29.83km Distance | 745m Gain

Antigua - our home of operations is situated in this 16th century colonial capital. We will take advantage of our first day here in Guatemala to get out, stretch the legs and become more acquainted with the Antigua. Our route today follows cobblestone roads and coffee finca trails and visits a variety of sites including "Colonias" - or Spanish neighborhoods spread throughout the valley. You will visit a chocolate factory - an artisan fruit wine producer and a macadamia farm. Learn first hand why we feel there is no place like Guatemala!

Day 2

The Forests of Tecpán 45km Distance | 1000m Gain

Ride quiet logging roads through old pine forests - reach your first viewpoint of Lake Atitlán. Descend rolling gravel through a patchwork of Mayan villages. Visit Lake Chixoy and nature reserve - Travel back in time. Tecpán is a region filled with history - home to the first capital of Guatemala est. 1525. Tecpán's population is over 90% indigenous, mostly descendants of the Kaqchikel Maya . Visiting Tecpán is like stepping back in time. It is home to dairy farms, quiet log cabins and deep pine forests that look a lot more like northern Europe than Guatemala. Our route today includes a large amount climbing - but the grades are gentle and the views more than make up for it. We will leave time for an afternoon tea and pie at a rustic log restaurant before shuttling back to Tecpán for the night.

Day 3

Tecpán - Panajachel 45km Distance | 1000m Gain

Follow a newly paved road along mountain ridges connecting Mayan towns and providing some of the best views of Lake Atitlán and the surrounding terrain. To the south the views stretch to the pacific ocean 2500m below - to the west you will get your first views of the trilogy of volcanoes that surround Lake Atitlán - Volcán Atitlán (3535m), Tolimán and San Pedro. (3020m) After a tough final climb you follow the gentle downhill along the cliffside rim of Lake Atitlán with amazing views of the lake in the afternoon sun. We will roll into Panajachel where we will stay for the night.



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Day 4

Vuelta de Lago Atitlán Part 1 42.5km Distance | 1174m Gain

The Circumnavigation of Lake Atitlán. This route involves little known gravel roads with expansive views and a 1200m downhill. We will start off with a shuttle up to the Mayan town of Sololá. We will then follow a “terracería” (cobblestone road) west along “ruta de mestizos” through San Jose Chacaya - famous for its 600+ year old terraced fields. Changing to gravel, the road follows a cliff with incredible views of Lake Atitlán. We will pass by a Mayan ceremonial cave - active to this day with human remains. We will climb the final stretch to a mirador and eco park overlooking the lake. The fun begins here with a 1100m paved descent back to the western shore of Lake Atitlán.

Day 5

Vuelta de Lago Atitlán Part 2 10km Distance | 300m Gain

All aboard! This is a cultural / light day to enjoy the cultural gems of Lake Atitlán. We will take to the water by private boat to explore the towns of the lake. Each of the 11 villages and towns around lake Atitlán has its own unique culture and scenery. Today we will visit four of the major ones. From San Pedro we will head to Santiago de Atitlán - the largest town on the lake, hidden inside an enormous inlet. We will explore before crossing to San Antonio Palopó - a village with an economy grounded in weaving and fishing. After lunch we will finish with a delightful 10km ride along shore of the Lake.

Day 6

The Quiché Highlands Chichicastenango and the Ruins of Q'umarkaj 29.83km Distance | 745m Gain
Quiché - a department with a history and culture all its own. Home to the K'iché Maya, the area has seen little change in the last 100 years. The people speak their own language and homestead deep in the pine mountains, weaving and farming. Today we will say our goodbye to Lake Atitlán heading up from Panajachel by shuttle to the heart the Guatemalan highlands. We will stop in Chichicastenango, a town with one of the most vibrant indigenous artisanal markets in the country. Here you can explore a labyrinth of stands where the locals sell their weavings, and produce from the region We traverse several major 400m+ canyons by bus, heading even further into the mountains to the trading town of Santa Cruz del Quiché. Here we will stretch the legs a bit for a short afternoon bike ride to the Q'umarkaj ruins (AD 1200). Those who wish can continue on for a 1-2hr singletrack loop in the forests of Quiché.

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Day 7

Quiché - Totonicapán Highland forests, meadows and waterfalls 52km Distance | 1534m Gain

This will be one of our largest climbs of the trip, but the grade is consistent and the views more than make up for it! Paved just a few years ago, this road travels along the spine of a mountain range with expansive views. We will start in Quiché traversing two major canyons, before gaining a ridge which will take up to the protected pine forests of Parcilidad Valazquez the largest protected pine forest in Central America. Here, near 3000m there is an eco-lodge where we will enjoy lunch and hot chocolate before cresting the mountain for an impressive view of Volcán Santa María and the Quetzaltenango valley. We will have a fun steep switchbacking descent into the Mayan town of Totonicapán before continuing to Quetzaltenango by bus for the night. | Logistics

Day 8

Quetzaltenango Active volcanoes and hot springs. 28km Distance | 746m Gain

Xela is Guatemala's second largest city - a cultural capital with several major universities and museums. The city is settled on a plain below the iconic pyramid of Volcán Santa María, with a secret: Santiaguito, one of Guatemala's most consistently active volcanoes, lies just behind it. Today, we will ride outside of the city following moderate singletrack through cattle pasture to an overlook of active Volcán Santiaguito - which is sure to put on a show. Will descend and wrap around Volcan Santa María to a deep valley and the town of Zunil. We will finish the day at Fuentes Georginas - a mountain side resort and natural hot springs with views of the volcanoes.

Day 9

Momostenango Gravel road bliss 43km Distance | 1038m Gain

Momostenango: dry, and densely chiseled with canyons and ridges, waterfalls and rivers. There is little to traffic and the people here live simply and off the land. Today, we are heading back into the indigenous highlands of Totonicapán - This will be the most remote stretch of our trip, crossing the beautiful pine forests of Momostenango and dropping to the Chixoy river valley. We will camp for the night near rio chixoy before continuing onward to Huehuetenango and the Cuchumatanes mountains.



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Day 10

A Huehuetenango Guatemala's hidden highway 54km Distance | 1730m Gain

They started the highway from Quiché to Huehuetenango years ago - it is not on most printed maps and was never finished. We will intersect the hidden highway and join it for the best part of it after climbing out of the Chixoy river valley. The day will be filled with wild views of Momostenango to the south and the towering Cuchumatanes to the north as we traverse along rolling ridges. In Huehuetenango we will make a visit to the ruins of Zaculeu, which was occupied in the Early Classic period (AD 250-600).

Day 11

Todos Santos "The Alps of Guatemala" 54km Distance | 1143m Gain

The Cuchumatanes mountains is the highest non-volcanic mountain range in Guatemala. The terrain and people here make it feel like visiting another world. On a clear day you will have a view of most of Guatemala's 37 volcanoes. Today we will follow a collection of agricultural and grazing paths across the alpine plains passing through communities of sheep herders and enormous agave plants. We will drop the bikes for a quick hike up to "la puerta del cielo" (the door to the sky) - the Cuchumatanes highpoint at 3837m (12,589ft) over the Todos Santos valley. In the afternoon we will make the descent down to Todos Santos in a region called "the alps of Guatemala".

Private Dates

This tour is only available as a Private Date, the route and details have been perfected, all we need is for you to pick a date for you and your gang. A tip from our local experts, this tour is best enjoyed from December through March with the least rain and slightly cooler temperatures.

Contact us for current pricing for this tour.