Caribbean & Cobblestones

Visiting: Belize, Guatemala, Mexico
Code: GSCT

Tour price from **GBP 640.00** for **10 days** - Land Only

Basic

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Caribbean & Cobblestones Trip Notes

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At Imaginative Traveller we always aim to provide accurate information for our travellers. Unfortunately information such as the price of optional activities is occasionally subject to change, and this means that we are constantly revising our trip notes. In order to ensure that you have the most up to date information for your trip we suggest that you check the trip notes for your tour around one month before departure.
Trip code: GSCT
Trip valid from: 01/01/2013
Trip valid until: 31/12/2013
Trip length: 10
Trip starts in: Cancun, Quintana Roo, Mexico
Trip ends in: Antigua Guatemala
Maximum group size: maximum 16

Highlights

1200-year-old Cliff-top Ruins Of Tulum

The Quetzal Of Guatemala - Your Currency And Spirit Guide

UNESCO World Heritage-listed Antigua Guatemala

UNESCO World Heritage-listed Mayan City Of Tikal

The Palm-fringed Island Of Caye Caulker

Punta Dancing

Belize's Waters

Burritos From A Street Vendor

Flores On Lago Petén Itzá

Some essential Spanish to get you by:- Where can we surf? – Donde se puede hacer surf?- It is hot, isn't it? – Hace calor, verdad?- A glass of red wine – un vino tinto- I love you Miguel – Te quiero Miguel(Was Central American Trails)

Itinerary

Day Cancun

Let's hope the next installment of The Real Cancun isn't being filmed when we arrive (well, some of you might not mind). Either way this place is pretty crazy. It's tourist central but a good spot for us to meet up and hit the beach.

Day Tulum - Chetumal

These are some impressive ruins. They're all crumbly and clinging to a cliff-top over a lovely beach.

Day Caye Caulker

head into Belize and catch a boat to Caye Caulker. Free time to dive/snorkel in the second largest barrier reef in the world or swing in a hammock under a palm tree.

Day Flores - Tikal Ruins

Time for our third country - Guatemala. Stop by the Mayan ruins at Tikal (think Mel Gibson's Apocalypto minus the violence), before arriving in Antigua.

Day Antigua

This is a city that feels more like a little town, full of cobbled streets and boasting three massive volcanoes huffing and puffing white smoke all the time.

Itinerary Variation

While the information presented here details our planned itinerary, including routes taken, activities included, accommodation and meeting times, please accept that unforseen changes may occur. We are constantly on the lookout to improve our program and further enhance your experience. Naturally, we will keep you up to date with any last minute amendments to your tour.

About The Imaginative Traveller

Our aim has always been to provide exceptional travel experiences. We believe that adventure travel should be stimulating, and that it should give you an authentic experience of a place. We want our travellers to relish the amazing diversity of countries and cultures the world has to offer. Our focus is on innovation, not imitation.

Obsessed with quality

One of our strengths has been our obsession with quality. We've always believed that our commitment to you doesn't end as soon as you've paid for your holiday. On the contrary, it is just beginning. Whilst most operators simply get a local company to handle the day to day operation of their tours, we do it all ourselves. We have managers for each of our **key destinations** around the world and all our small groups are escorted by our own leaders. Our local teams include guides, drivers, administration staff and contacts in the local community who help us ensure that our adventures are active and involving.

For comparability, all prices in this dossier are quoted in one currency. We use the US Dollar since that is familiar to most. However, once on tour you will need to pay for all goods and services in the local currency. See your Country Dossier for details of exchange rates.

Trip Grade

Culture
Whether you're taking in man's greatest works at places like Petra or Angkor Wat, experiencing grand set-pieces like the Trans-Mongolian Railway or trying your hand at regional specialities like tango in Buenos Aires, getting to grips with local cultures is what travel's all about. A few tips from a guide and a sense of adventure are pretty much all you need. So what are you waiting for? It's time to get the lowdown on high Tibet among Lhasa's magisterial temples; follow up Delhi's eye-popping bustle with a fix of its fiery food; and mix manic markets and Incan masterpieces in Peru.

Included

- Gecko's expert English-speaking regional leader throughout the tour, and local guides at some sites. - Orientation walking tour in Caye Caulker, Flores and Antigua. - Sightseeing (including entrance fees and local guides): pre-Columbian walled city ruins of Tulum and ancient city of Tikal. - Return speedboat ride from Belize City to the palm-fringed island of Caye Caulker. - Guided walk to the summit of one of the volcanoes near Antigua. - Free time to relax on the beaches of Cancun and Caye Caulker.

Not included

International flights, arrival and departure transfers, departure and airport taxes, visas, meals, all optional tours or activities during free time, entrance fees, transfers outside of the tour program, travel insurance, tips and items of a personal nature.

Meals

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Accommodation

Overnight bus,Hotel

Single room supplement

Most of our travellers like the thought of travelling with a few like-minded souls. There are NO compulsory single supplements on most tours as we simply arrange twin shared accommodation for you and another tour member of the same sex. But don't worry if that doesn't appeal. We do understand there are times when you just want a bit of privacy and 'me' time so we are more than happy to arrange a private room upon request when you book.

Transport

Boat,Local bus,Taxi

The itinerary and supplementary information has been compiled with care and provided in good faith. However it may be subject to change, and does not form part of a contract between the client

and The Imaginative Traveller.

Responsible Travel - Travellers' Guidelines

At Imaginative Traveller we love helping our clients experience the beauty and cultures of the destinations we visit. However, hand in hand with this we have always been aware that we have a responsibility to minimise any negative impacts that tourism can bring.

Responsible Travel is twofold. It's about taking people to the places they want to go in a safe and responsible manner but also about respecting and maintaining the natural and often delicate balance of the destination. Economic gain from tourism is often fundamental to a country, but should never be at the expense of its culture or the environment.

Our Aims

It is our aim to provide journeys that have minimal negative and maximum positive impact on the places we visit.

We do not believe that, as visitors, we should impose our own cultures on others; rather that we should experience foreign cultures and appreciate them for what they are.

Whilst it is our aim to show destinations and cultures in a positive light, we do not believe in papering over the cracks or shielding visitors from the realities of life. This does not mean, however, that we condone or endorse certain situations or regimes that may be in place.
Our guidelines are meant not as rigid instructions but rather as suggestions to make our holidays more enjoyable – for everybody. As cultural and environmental sensitivities vary from country to country more specific guidelines can be found in our individual country and trip dossiers.

Travellers' Guidelines

✓ Before you depart try to spend some time familiarising yourself with the destination you will be travelling to – their culture and customs. The country dossiers on our website offer detailed information about all the regions we visit. They also include some useful phrases in the local language for you to use on your trip! A few words of the local language can open up many more opportunities for you to interact with the people you will meet.

✓ Although it is tempting to give out pens, sweets and money to people begging, and particularly tempting to give to children, we feel that this encourages a begging mentality and has a long-term negative impact on communities. If someone begging earns more than someone in the same community who works this can discourage local employment. If children regularly bring home money it may discourage their parents from sending them to school. It is of course your own personal choice but you could consider giving to registered charities or contributing to our Responsible Travel fund instead. Money donated

through our fund to our worldwide projects is matched pound for pound by Imaginative Traveller and used to help local grassroots projects.

- ✓ Always ask permission to photograph local people and respect their decision if they would prefer not to have their picture taken.
- ✓ Respect local dress codes, especially at religious sites. Our tour leaders are always on hand to give you advice about this.
- ✓ In many of the countries we visit you might see examples of animal cruelty (for example dancing bears, performing monkeys and snake charmers). Please do not take photographs of this or offer money as it encourages the activity.
- ✓ Respect the environment you are in. It sounds obvious but do not throw litter, take it with you or use rubbish bins! You may see locals throwing rubbish on the street but do not follow their example!
- ✓ When shopping in countries where haggling is the norm – enjoy it and only pay what you feel is a fair price for the goods you are purchasing. However, remember that the shopkeeper does have to make a living so do stop once you have reached a price you are happy with. Bargaining should be fun but always remember that a small amount can mean much more to the vendor than to you.
- ✓ Endeavor to take home souvenirs made locally; the money you spend can be very important to the local communities. However, do use your common sense and don't buy anything that you think might be made out of endangered animals or plants.
- ✓ To help keep as much money as possible in the host country - try to eat in locally owned restaurants and order local drinks and produce rather than international brands.
- ✓ In hotels do be conscious of how much water you are using. Many of the areas we visit regularly have shortages; try not to have hour long showers! Don't leave lights, air conditioners or fans on when you leave the room – you wouldn't at home!
- ✓ Respect the environment you are in, especially when in national parks or reserves. Pay attention to rules about keeping on paths, keeping a distance from animals and not removing any of the natural habitat.
- ✓ Relax and immerse yourself in the differences of the culture you are in – you'll be back home in the familiar soon enough (and wishing you were still on holiday!). These cultural differences are part of what makes your experience special.

If you would like to offset the carbon dioxide that will be produced on your flights you can do this on our website (**on our Responsible travel page**). We work with climatecare, who will reduce the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide that you produce in another part of the World through their emission reduction projects. These projects are low carbon efficient technologies in developing countries and not only serve to reduce emissions but also help to spread the adoption of low carbon technologies and

improve the quality of life for local communities. Details of climatecare's projects can be **found on their website**.

If you would like to contribute to our Worldwide projects, helping communities all over the World, you can also do this on our website or with a sales consultant. Please refer to our **responsible travel page** on the website for details of our current projects. Any donation you make will be matched £ for £ by Imaginative Traveller (up to a maximum of £1000).

Have a great trip!

Please do let us know if you have any comments about responsible travel at **rto@imtrav.net**

The Imaginative Traveller & Gecko's Adventures This trip is operated by our partner company, Gecko's Adventures. Gecko's is an Australia based company with more than 10 years experience in adventure travel and they share our ethos for offering unique holiday adventures. As this is a code shared departure you can expect there to be both Imaginative Traveller and Gecko's travellers on your trip.
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