



# Nicaragua

**JANUARY 8-16, 2016**

Join Seacology in Nicaragua for an unforgettable tour of Lake Nicaragua and its breathtaking archipelago of over 350 volcanic islands. Enjoy the Spanish Colonial grandeur of Granada and the tranquility of the island of Jicaro, located on the edge of a bird preserve. A treasure trove of natural marvels awaits on Ometepe Island, and the journey concludes on the Pacific Coast beaches of San Juan del Sur. Witness Seacology's mission in action, preserving Nicaragua's natural wealth while helping local communities.

**SEACOLOGY**

# Granada



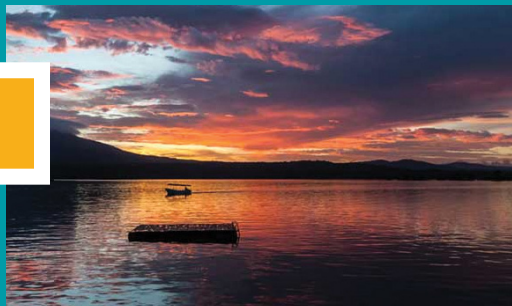
Your journey begins at Granada, the gateway to Lake Nicaragua. The city was founded in 1524 and is believed to be the second oldest city established in mainland Latin America during the Spanish conquest. Granada is characterized by brightly colored Spanish Colonial architecture, visible throughout the city center. There are bustling markets and historic civic buildings, as well as a wide array of popular restaurants and bars, especially along the boulevard from the central park to the shores of Lake Nicaragua.

Stay at the Hotel Plaza Colón, located right on Granada's main town square, facing the cathedral. The building has been lovingly restored, with beautiful woodwork and spacious guest rooms with high ceilings. There is a tranquil courtyard with a pool and the veranda is a wonderful spot to people watch. In addition to superior accommodations and service, the Hotel Plaza Colón is committed to sustainability and has been verified by the Rainforest Alliance. It is the only boutique hotel in Granada fully owned and operated by Nicaraguans.

## Jicaro Island

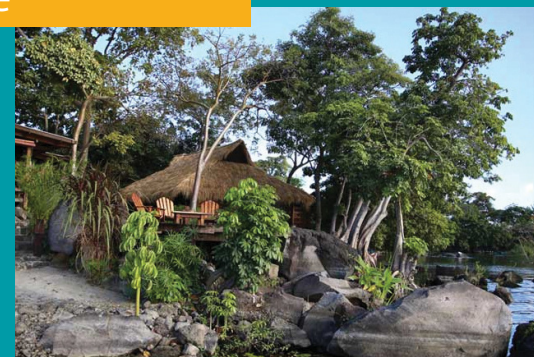
Thousands of years ago, Mombacho Volcano erupted, and huge rocks and lava flowed into Lake Nicaragua creating an archipelago of over 350 islands.

Today, many species of birds and a great variety of flora and fauna can be observed in the archipelago. The islands are inhabited by approximately 1,200 people who make their living from fishing. You will stay on Jicaro Island at the edge of a bird reserve, only a 15-minute boat ride from Granada.



## Jicaro Island Ecolodge

Recognized as one of National Geographic Traveler's World's Best Ecolodges, the Jicaro Island Ecolodge was built with careful planning for water supply, wastewater treatment, and electricity usage. Harmony with nature and the local community were key considerations in its development. You will stay in a private luxury two-story casita with a terrace overlooking Lake Nicaragua, where you can take in spectacular views of the Mombacho Volcano.



## Ometepe Island



Ometepe Island has a wealth of natural marvels and pre-Columbian relics; it's considered to be one of the largest and most beautiful of the world's lake-based islands. You will enjoy lunch in the community of Puesta del Sol and learn how local artisans make wine from hibiscus flowers. Plan to revel in the abundant plant and animal life of the mystical Charco Verde lagoon. You can also hike the verdant hills and unfold the legend of "Chico Largo," who used to live there. Not to be missed is a visit to the Ojo de Agua, a natural spring pool filled with crystal-clear water from an underground river that originates in the Maderas Volcano.



# CONSERVATION IN ACTION

## TOTOCO EcoLodge



Sitting more than 600 feet above sea level, TOTOCO EcoLodge sits at the gateway to Maderas Volcano's cloud forest, where you will be surrounded by all things natural. Enjoy panoramic views from the swimming pool or your private porch, taking in the tranquility of the island. TOTOCO is committed to sustainability, and all lodges have an independent renewable energy supply. The property also has its own organic farm, and it borders one of the island's premier organic shade-grown coffee plantations.

## San Juan del Sur



In little more than an hour's journey, you'll transit from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean and find yourself in yet another magical locale. San Juan del Sur, with its beautiful beaches, is a popular destination in Nicaragua, but has maintained its charm and laid-back atmosphere.

Just 20 minutes north of San Juan del Sur, Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge sits on a crescent-shaped beach with an estuary and an exotic rainforest. Nearly half of this 4,000-acre expanse of the Nicaraguan jungle is a private protected reserve. A suspension bridge over a canyon leads to your rustic wood and stone bungalow overlooking miles of private beach, which is frequented year-round by nesting sea turtles.



## Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge

## PRESERVING NATURE'S WONDERS

Ometepe is the largest volcanic island within a freshwater lake in the world, and is one of the largest non-oceanic islands in the world. The island's two volcanic peaks—the forest-clad, dormant Volcán Maderas and the active Volcán Concepción—are joined by a low wetland isthmus. As a result, the island of Ometepe boasts an extraordinarily diverse mosaic of forest and wetland habitats, representative of the majority of Nicaragua's ecosystems, and supports a dazzling array of species. The island is of particular importance for neo-tropical migratory birds migrating to Central and South America from the north. The entire island is a Biosphere Reserve declared by UNESCO in 2012.



On Ometepe, you will visit Finca Magdalena and its field base for volunteer park rangers and tour guides. Seacology is funding a renovation of the building so it can serve as a visitors' center for those wishing to explore trails throughout the national park. An outdoor exhibit will also be created, allowing tourists to have a glimpse into the species that inhabit the park. The permanent presence of park rangers, who are also tour guides, will allow better control of activities and whereabouts of visitors within the park, and will ensure that they comply with regulations while reducing impacts to the park.

## PROTECTING VULNERABLE & ENDANGERED SPECIES



You will also travel south of San Juan del Sur to the La Flor Wildlife Refuge, which is one of five major "arribada" or mass nesting beaches in the eastern Pacific Ocean. There, you'll meet with community rangers who work with our nonprofit partner Paso Pacifico. These local rangers are helping to protect four nesting sea turtle species including the leatherback, hawksbill, green and olive ridley turtles. You will visit a nearby sea turtle nursery run by local women, where you may even have the opportunity to hold and release baby sea turtles into the ocean.

# TRAVEL ITINERARY

- Jan. 8** Arrive at Augusto César Sandino International Airport (ACS) in Managua, Nicaragua. You will be met at the airport and transferred to the Hotel Plaza Colón in Granada. Join Seacology Executive Director Duane Silverstein for a welcome dinner at the hotel. **D**
- Jan. 9** Morning tour of Spanish Colonial Granada. Lunch at a project for underprivileged children. Afternoon boat ride from Granada to Jicaro Island in the Las Isletas archipelago. Overnight at Jicaro Island Ecolodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 10** Day at leisure. You can visit one of the projects of the hotel, such as a school; enjoy one of the many activities such as a tour of Mombacho Volcano, standup paddling or kayaking; or just relax at the pool. Overnight at Jicaro Island Ecolodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 11** Morning ferry to Ometepe Island. Lunch at a women's cooperative on the way to the hotel. Optional afternoon leisure activities, such as kayaking; swimming in Ojo de Agua, a natural spring pool; or sunning on the beach of Santo Domingo. Overnight at TOTOCO EcoLodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 12** Visit to Seacology's project at Finca Magdalena, a community farm. Guided tour of nearby rock carvings (petroglyphs) featuring highlights of the island's history to follow. Afternoon leisure activities optional. Overnight at TOTOCO EcoLodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 13** Morning ferry to the mainland and road trip to the Morgan's Rock just above San Juan del Sur on the Pacific Ocean coastline. Enjoy a sunset boat trip. Overnight at Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 14** Visit to the La Flor Wildlife Refuge where Seacology's NGO partner Paso Pacifico helps protect four species of nesting sea turtles. Travel to a nearby sea turtle nursery run by local women. Overnight at Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 15** Day at leisure. Enjoy a walk in the peaceful surroundings; visit a project teaching creative skills to children; go for a sail or horseback riding; or relax on the beach. Join the group for a farewell dinner at El Timon Restaurant in San Juan del Sur. Overnight at Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge. **BLD**
- Jan. 16** Travel to Augusto César Sandino International Airport in Managua for international departures. **B**

**B** breakfast included; **L** lunch included; **D** dinner included



## BOOK YOUR SPOT

Reservations can be made with a 50% non-refundable deposit. Final payment is due by October 9, 2015. Payments can be made to Elevate Destinations by electronic check (ACH), wire transfer, or credit card. A 3% charge is levied on credit card charges.

<b>Double Occupancy</b>	\$4,600 per person*
<b>Single Occupancy</b>	\$5,300 per person*

*\*These prices do not include international airfare.*

Cost includes accommodation and meals as indicated in itinerary above, English-speaking guide and Seacology representative throughout, private ground transportation, \$100 carbon-offset donation, and a Seacology project site visit. Cost does not include international airfare, travel insurance, visa, entry tax, or personal expenses.

Trip cancellation insurance is recommended for all participants:  
[www.csatravelpro.com](http://www.csatravelpro.com); Agent code W8000402.

To register or for more information, please contact:  
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Seacology helps protect island habitats and assists local communities by offering villages a unique deal: if they agree to create a forest or marine reserve, we'll provide funds for something the village needs, like a schoolhouse or health clinic. Since 1991 Seacology has launched over 250 projects on islands in 56 countries, protecting more than 1 million acres of marine and forest habitat.