EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Active Nicaragua (FNI 2014)

MULTI-ACTIVITY

TOUR DURATION **15** DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Standard
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Code: FNI

Tour Highlights - Active Nicaragua

- ✓ Volcanoes - Climb to the top of Cerro Negro Volcano, an active volcano.
- ✓ Sandy beaches - Swim and surf at Playa Los Cordones
- ✓ Lakes - Kayak amongst the tropical islands Las Isletas on Lake Nicaragua.Stay on Ometepe, a laid-back volcanic island
- ✓ Cloud forest - Learn about the life of the cloud forest and zip wire through the trees at Mombacho Volcano
- ✓ Wildlife - Look for crocodiles, monkeys and exotic birds
- ✓ Caribbean island - Snorkel from Corn Island in the azure, warm waters of the Caribbean Sea

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	10 nights Standard Hotel 2 nights Simple Lodge 2 nights Simple Hotel
Included Meals:	14 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 4 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Managua
End Point:	Tour ends: Managua
Transport:	Bus, Boat, Bicycle
Countries:	Nicaragua
Minimum Age:	From 6 years

Active Nicaragua

From zip-wiring through tree-top canopies to climbing an active volcano, Nicaragua is a wonderful destination for a family adventure. We search for crocodiles in mangrove-lined forests, track monkeys in Chocoyero El Brujo National Park and kayak on Lake Nicaragua. We also visit a local school, surf and stay on a volcanic island, before relaxaing on the golden beaches of Corn Island.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour Managua

In comparison with colonial Leon and Granada, Managua is not the most attractive of Nicaragua's cities but it does have its own curious, if somewhat unorthodox, charm. Badly damaged in the 1972 earthquake, the city has been rebuilt, and is now a busy, modern city.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 2 Drive to León via the Reserve Juan Venado; PM boat tour

Leaving Managua behind this morning, we head first to Mirador Tiscapa, situated over-looking a volcanic crater lake that is more than 10,000 years old. Before the revolution, the hill was home to the old presidential palace and it provides some superb views down across the city. Continuing on we then drive to the old colonial capital of León, lying in the shadow of the Cordillera de los Maribios Mountains. After checking in to our centrally located hotel, we head out again, following the Pacific coast to our lunch stop in a charming seafood restaurant overlooking the ocean. After lunch we continue to the Natural Reserve Isla Juan Venado, located just to the south of the golden beaches of Las Peñitas. Here we have an afternoon boat tour booked to take us out to the island reserve, a haven for caymans, iguanas, crocodiles and birds. It is also a favoured nesting area for the Olive Ridley sea turtles, who come here between August and December each year to lay their eggs. Late this afternoon we will return to León.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 3 AM climb an active volcano; PM visit San Jacinto hotsprings

After breakfast this morning we climb the youngest volcano in Central America, the basal-tic cinder cone of Cerro Negro (Black Hill). Occupying part of the Cordillera de los Maribios mountain range to the east of the city, it rises to a height of 728 metres and, together with a guide; we will spend the morning climbing its gravelly slopes. The views from the top provide some stunning panoramas across the surrounding landscapes and on the descent you can run, jump or roll down the sandy ash! Returning to León there will then be time for a short siesta, before driving to the hot springs at San Jacinto, for a relaxing afternoon.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 4 Drive to Playa Los Cardones. PM surfing lessons

We start this morning with a short tour of the city. Still considered the intellectual centre of Nicaragua, León was founded in 1525 and was the capital for 200 years. The old buildings, with their wrought iron balconies and the arched colonnades, and the narrow streets, all invest the city with an atmosphere of elegant serenity that seems to been frozen in time. The city's huge cathedral is believed to be the largest in Central America and a climb up to its roof affords some spectacular views across the city and out towards the volcanoes in the distance. We will also visit the entertaining and illuminating Museum of Legends and Traditions this afternoon. Located in a once infamous prison, today the cells are occupied with mannequins that illustrate some 14 different myths and legends. After this we will continue to Playa Los Cardones. Arriving around midday we check into our lodge, after which the rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy some included surfing lessons with a qualified instructor. The area of water closest to the lodge is ideal for those with little or no experience of surfing and each lesson last about an hour, with children between 6 and 11 being given individual instruction. We will be accommodated for the next two nights in palm thatched bungalows that spread out along the coast, offering private terraces and relaxing hammocks to make the most of the beachside location. The eco lodge is committed to promote conservation. The lodge itself is constructed with Native materials and construction techniques to blend in with the environment. All energy is supplied by solar panels and water is supplied from their own well. Water and energy conservation is encouraged. Organic refuse is recycled on site by thermophilic compost and all plastic, glass, iron, aluminium and paper are recycled locally. Several acres of the property are preserved for the protection of the wildlife in the area. Please note you will not be able to charge any batteries whilst staying here.

Overnight: **Simple Lodge**

DAY 5 At Playa Los Cardones; school visit (in term-time)

After breakfast we pay a visit to a local school to learn a little about life and learning in a Nicaraguan school. Education in Nicaragua is free, with elementary education also being compulsory, however it is difficult to enforce in the rural communities as many children have to work. Please note: this activity will not be possible during the school holidays, which run from the beginning of December until the end of January. Back at our lodge you will be able to visit the turtle hatchery, where we may be lucky enough to watch a baby turtle being born. These shores are a haven for Olive Ridley turtles, which come here every year to nest along the Pacific coastline. The rest of the afternoon is free to hit the beach again, or perhaps enjoy some more surfing (optional).

Overnight: **Simple Lodge**

DAY 6 Drive to San Jorge: Ferry to Ometepe Island

Turning our back on the ocean this morning we head inland, towards the expansive shores of Lago de Nicaragua and the island of Ometepe. From here we then drive to the Momotombo chocolate factory, where we can see some of Costa Rica's world famous cacao beans being turned into a range of organic chocolate - flavoured with an enticing choice of tropical ingredients, including guava, lemon-grass and ginger. We continue to the town of Rivas for lunch, we then drive the short distance to San Jorge, where we take the ferry across to the island. Ometepe is made up of two volcanoes connected by an isthmus; indeed its name comes from the Nahuati language and means 'two hills'. The perfect cone of Concepción volcano soars from the depths of Lake Nicaragua to 1610m, only just dwarfing the neighbouring Maderas volcano at 1394m. On arrival on the island we transfer to Charco Verde for the next two nights.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**

DAY 7 On Ometepe Island

After breakfast we will short walk around the Lagoon at the Charco Verde reserve. Then, drive to the feet of Maderas volcano to Finca Magdalena, a popular place to visit on Ometepe reknown for it organic farming processes. The finca is home to the Cooperativa Carlos Díaz Cajina an agricultural cooperative which consists of 24 members and their families' one of whom will show us how organic coffee, plantains, milk, corn, beans, rice and vegetables are produced. From here we will continue to Playa Santo Domingo where you will be able to relax with a cool drink and enjoy a swim in Lago Nicaragua. From here we will drive the short distance to Ojo de Agua, a beautiful swimming hole near Playa Santo Domingo.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**

DAY 8 Drive to Granada via the Mombacho Volcano; canopy tour on zip wires

Heading back to the ferry port on the outskirts of San Jose del Sur, we cross back to the mainland this morning, from where we drive to the Mombacho Volcano, one of the most distinctive landmarks anywhere in the country. At the entrance we take the ecomovil up to the top, snaking our way up a steep slope and past fields of coffee plants as we make our way up to the cloud forest. The views from up here can be spectacular and we might even catch a glimpse of Granada and Las Isletas far below. After learning something about the unique flora and fauna of the cloud forest we will drive back down to the base of the volcano where you have a chance to glide through the lush forest on a canopy tour zipping through the trees on a wire harness far above the volcanic craters. After this adrenaline filled adventure we then return to the base of the volcano to continue our journey north, towards the lovely city of Granada.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 9 City tour of Granada. Visit to Masaya volcano and market

Atmospheric Granada is a colonial gem, situated at the foot of Mombacho volcano on the north-west shore of Lake Nicaragua. It was the first colonial city in Nicaragua, founded in 1524 by the conquistador Hernandez de Cordoba and its magnificent setting, set off by baroque and renaissance buildings, is a pure visual delight. We plan a city tour this morning, on foot and by traditional horse carriage, visiting some of the city's most beautiful colonial buildings and learning more of its fascinating history. Granada is the perfect city to explore on foot, wandering the narrow lanes and alleyways and discovering its hidden delights amongst the lush greenery and historic buildings. We also visit a chocolate factory and take part in a chocoalte workshop. After lunch we will visit the popular Masaya market, a major centre for arts and crafts, where you can throw yourself into the hustle and bustle and barter for everything from baskets and pottery to jewellery and leather work. Later we visit the tranquil setting of the Masaya Volcano National Park, where you can peer into the bowels of this smoking, belching giant crater. From here we return to Granada for our second evening.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 10 Cycle to Puerto Asese; kayaking around Las Isletas

Puerto Asese lies just 6 kilometres from Granada, making it an ideal destination this morning to head to on bikes. From here we take to the waters of Lake Nicaragua in kayaks, spending the morning paddling through some of the myriad of islands and inlets that pepper this coastline. Beautifully lush, these tropical islets are a magnet for the local birdlife and we'll have time to linger and enjoy this most tranquil of settings before taking lunch on one of the islands. There are some 365 islands occupying this vast expanse of water and we have the rest of the afternoon to explore before we head back to Granada once more.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 11 Fly to Corn Island

Transferring to Managua Airport this morning we fly east, towards the Caribbean and the remote landscapes of Corn Island. Please note that there is a weight limit of 11kg per person on the flight to Corn Island and you can leave any excess luggage on the mainland where you can collect it on your return. On arrival we will check in to our hotel, after which the rest of the day is free to enjoy at your leisure. Corn Island is blessed with three miles of white sandy beach and its crystal clear waters present a slice of turquoise paradise, so we can recommend an afternoon dip in the Caribbean.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 12 On Corn Island; swimming and relaxing

Lying 70 km off Nicaragua's Caribbean coast, Corn Island was once a British Protectorate and English is still widely spoken amongst the local people. Completely different from anywhere else in Nicaragua, the Caribbean islands and coast are largely inhabited by a mix of Creole people of mixed black heritage and Spanish speaking Mestizos, making it a fascinating mix of cultures and traditions. With two days to explore and play, the island is very much yours to enjoy. You can take a walk around the island, sit under a coconut palm tree or snorkel amongst tropical fish on the reef. Nearby Little Corn Island and its palm fringed beach is easily accessible by

boat, so why not take a trip across to explore. In the evenings you can try some fresh lobster or prawns at one of the local restaurants and just sit back and enjoy the laid-back charm of the Caribbean.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 13 On Corn Island; swimming and relaxing

Another free day to enjoy this Caribbean island.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 14 Fly to Managua. Afternoon visit to Chocoyero Natural Reserve

We will take an early morning transfer to the airport and flight to Managua. Then transport to your hotel located just two miles away from Airport. Then, we will drive to Mirador Tiscapa, a historical sight and great viewpoint. From here, you will have superb views of the city and Tiscapa Lagoon which is of volcanic origin and more than 10.000 years old. Afterwards, we will drive to Chocoyero-El Brujo Natural Reserve and enjoy visiting its dry tropical forest where we will be able to see monkeys and several species of birds' above all 'green parakeets'. In the late afternoon we return to Managua.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

DAY 15 Tour ends Managua

Our tour ends this morning in Managua.

Ability to swim required

Please note: Participation in canoeing, kayaking, or rafting (including white-water) requires that you are able to swim 25 metres unaided.

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 14 breakfasts, 8 lunches,4 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

International Departure Taxes

There is an entry tax to Nicaragua of 10USD

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Playa Los Cardones - Hire a surf board - US$ 20 half day
Corn Island Snorkelling US$ 20 (includes transport, gear and guide - although you may prefer to bring your own gear); Diving on Corn Island US$ 80 (includes transport, gear and guide); Diving on Little Corn Island US$ 45 (includes transport, gear and guide). Remember to bring your PADI certificate if you wish to dive.
Hire a golf cart (Please note you will need a driving license)

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders

may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US$ 25 for tipping. 10% is expected and often added in restaurants.

Foreign Exchange

Nicaragua

ATM Availability: Available in most cities and towns. We do not recommend relying on them as your sole source of spending money

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are of limited use, but may be brought along 'just in case'.

Travellers Cheques: We do not recommend

Local Currency: Cordoba

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry your funds in U.S. currency (NOT Sterling, which is almost impossible to change). It is advisable to bring at least US$300 – $400 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denomination notes (in good condition). Note: US dollar bills with the series CB-B2 year 2001 will not be accepted for exchange. Also be aware that $100 bills are often not accepted.

Where to Exchange: Most major towns. Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival. Exchanges at border.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

For passengers making their own travel arrangements, please ensure you join the group as described on day one of the tour itinerary. If you are considering purchasing your own airline tickets, you can book these through any travel agent, directly with an airline or through an online flight consolidator. In all cases, we would be happy to arrange transfers to and from the joining point of your tour if required.

Joining Tour Abroad

Clients booked on **'Land Only'** arrangements should make their own way to the joining point. Please refer to separate **'Joining Instructions'** for time and place of rendezvous with tour leader

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining **any** of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

If you require travel insurance for your tour, Explore Worldwide is an appointed representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority. Our travel insurance policy is specially tailored to the needs of the adventure traveller and will cover you for any included activity on any Explore trip. You can either purchase this at the time of booking or call us on 0844 499 0903 after you have booked.

Visa Information

Nicaragua: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.
Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change.
You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). This applies if you enter the country by sea or by air on a carrier participating in the visa

waiver scheme, holding a return/ onward ticket. The passport requirements are that it must be machine readable, and must contain a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home.

When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. Anyone applying for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ESTA) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit www.usembassy.org.uk

Lone Parents

Nicaragua

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Nicaraguan embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

Vaccinations & Protection

Nicaragua

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on malaria. Please note: If you are entering from any of the following countries (Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, French Guyana, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Nigeria, Benin, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Gambia and Sudan) are now required to produce an International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis documenting yelllow fever vaccination before entry to Costa Rica will be granted. Certificates are valid 10 days after the date of vaccination. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Nicaragua

Tropical, with little seasonal variation in temperature. The heavy rainy season is May to October but it can rain at any time along the Caribbean coast of Rio San Juan. There are 3 main climactic zones, the hot tropical lowlands and the cooler hill region, which has a larger range of daily temperature.

Clothing

On Corn Island and around Managua you will need loose-fitting comfortable, hot-weather clothes (100% cotton is recommended). You should bring lightweight long trousers and a lightweight long-sleeved shirt to wear in the jungle to protect against insects. Also pack a fleece for evenings in the jungle. Bring a waterproof jacket as it can rain at any time in the rainforest area around Rio San Juan and the Caribbean. Don’t forget your swimming costume.

Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat, sunscreen, sun hat and insect repellent. A torch (preferably a head torch), mask and snorkel and perhaps a lycra vest or top for surfing. Also you may wish to consider bringing pens, markers, notebooks or simple English books and games for the school visit. An umbrella and light waterproof may also be useful.

Footwear

Lightweight walking boots plus comfortable trainers and sandals for travelling and relaxing. Water sandals may be useful.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Please note there is an 11kg luggage allowance on the flights to and from Corn Island. In addittion to your main luggage it is worth bringing a smaller overnight bag for the Corn Island stay as your main luggage can be left on the mainland and collected on your return.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Food

The prices for meals and drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive. The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Nicaragua

Lunch £: 5.00

Dinner £: 8.00

Drink

Nicaragua

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00

Water £: 0.80

Country details

Nicaragua

Population: 5,891,199

Size of Country: 130,373 sq km

Major Language: Spanish

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: -6

Electric Supply & Plugs

Nicaragua

2 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: The Sunshine Orphanage (which cares for abandoned children in Luxor, Egypt), Education for All (sponsoring children through their secondary education in Morocco), The Hope Foundation (helping an Indian Village to recover from the 2004 Tsunami) and the Mufindi Orphanage, which support AIDS orphans in Tanzania.

We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation, Travel Operators for Tigers (helping save the Bengal Tiger from extinction) and Friends for Conservation. We have also adopted a beautiful Sri Lankan Elephant called 'Serendip'.

We are delighted to have received a Five Star sustainable tourism status from the Association of Independent Tour Operators in recognition of our on-going commitment to sustainable tourism.

Cool Earth

Explore are delighted to support Cool Earth to reduce carbon emissions through preventing the illegal deforestation of the South America rainforest. One of the top sources of global carbon emissions, rainforest deforestation equivalent to the USA's annual emissions, it also destroys flora and fauna, sometimes to the point of extinction. It also degrades the lives and communities of the 350 million residents of the rainforest.

Cool Earth prevents the deforestation through its support of local communities as forest guardians and by focussing on areas in immediate danger of deforestation. It has so far protected over 350,000 acres of rainforest, with each acre saving an emission of 260 tons of CO_2, as well as protecting rare animals and plants. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year. In addition to mitigating emissions, when you travel with Explore, you are helping to protect the source of 20% of the world's fresh water and oxygen, as well as the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion people who are reliant on the rainforest. www.coolearth.org

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2014.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2014 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2014. 2015/16 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

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