

# Explore Guatemala...

## ...native land of the Maya



**Vickie VanKoten** invites you to pack your bags and get your expectations in gear for this travel experience of a lifetime. Guatemala, where the rich tapestry of ancient Maya cultures and traditions woven in with historical European influences has all come together; where extinct volcanoes and ancient earthquakes have created one of the most beautiful countries in the world;

where you will enter into a provocative existence of ancient civilization with western influences, on a most incredible cultural, textile, market, village, and All Saints Day tour.

Vickie brought back many weavings and textiles and was enthralled by the vibrant colors she saw on her first trip to Guatemala. Come join Vickie VanKoten on cobblestone roads to explore ancient ruins, in Maya villages to discover colorful markets, on shopping excursions, and strolls through exquisite gardens. You will experience a world of delights and carry home memories for a lifetime.

The highlands of Guatemala is vibrant and exciting; witness the Maya who still live and survive as they have for hundreds of years; people who are happy and at peace with the beauty they are able to weave into their textiles, with the produce they grow and sell at their markets, with a blend of pagan rituals and Christian beliefs, with simple lives not totally influenced by the need for modern technology. They are a very friendly people. Vickie fell in love with the rich colors, the folk art, and the textiles that are still hand woven and worn by most of the Maya population today. The Spanish influence on architecture and design, blended with many other cultures offers up a landscape that she found simply delightful.

### Setting and Highlights...

#### Guatemala City...

Discover the beauty of the **Hotel Vista Real** ([www.vistareal.com](http://www.vistareal.com)) overlooking the City and facing the colossal "Fuego" and "Agua" volcanoes. Its feel and look is a resplendent blend of Guatemalan and Mexican art and architecture.

**Finca Los Tarrales...** Experience an authentic Guatemala Coffee Plantation and Private Reserve with its exotic flower operation exporting the world over. Sleeping and dining in screened-in plantation lodges will evoke visions of "Out of Africa". Los Tarrales ([www.tarrales.com](http://www.tarrales.com)) encompasses over 3000 acres of pristine forest ascending the south side of Volcano Atitlán.

#### Lake Atitlán and Villages...

Travel through the highlands of Guatemala with vistas of great mountain peaks, plateaus, and valleys. Lake Atitlán, "the most beautiful lake in the world", with its three towering volcanoes standing guard over azure waters and twelve Maya villages is truly inspirational. You will feel suspended in time as you watch a Maya fisherman in his dugout *cayuco*, plying his trade as his ancestors have done for centuries. The color, the dramatic landscapes, the deeply entrenched Maya culture will create memories to last a lifetime. Stay at the **Hotel Atitlán** ([www.hotelatitlan.com](http://www.hotelatitlan.com)), on the water's edge and surrounded by beautiful botanical gardens.

#### Chichicastenango...

The markets are the "crown jewel" of Guatemala, brimming with beautiful hand woven textiles and splendid works of art and crafts in designs and techniques passed on from generation to generation. The Maya/Catholic rituals and open-air market of world famous Chichicastenango, and the blazing colors of everyday dress will enthrall you. Here you will stroll the market and visit the churches of this unique Maya village.

#### Antigua...

In a verdant valley, surrounded by lofty volcanoes, the picturesque, time trapped city of Antigua will capture your heart. The romantic ambiance of its richly textured ruins, draped in vibrant bougainvillea, its peaceful parks, cobblestone streets, churches, monasteries, and colonial homes with courtyards provide artistic inspiration. Your stay in Antigua will be at the **Hotel Casa Santo Domingo** (built from the ruins of a 16<sup>th</sup> century monastery [www.casasantodomingo.com.gt](http://www.casasantodomingo.com.gt)). The sounds of running water in the stone-carved fountains, candlelight throughout the hallways and fresh flowers everywhere will simply take your breath away.

#### Tikal Add-On: October 23 - 24 2009

Discover *Tikal*, the lost world once inhabited by the ancient Maya more than two thousand years ago, a legacy to one of the most refined civilizations in the history of the world. Mammoth pyramids with temples on top attest to the skill, intelligence, and high civilization of these ancient peoples. Who were they? Why did they disappear? Their voices speak from the dust through the ruins left behind, ruins that rival any Egyptian site.



#### To enroll...

Detach the registration form and send it with your deposit or full payment check (**group limited to 20**, date of registration request determines priority of space) made **payable to Explore Guatemala, L.L.C.** Upon enrollment, additional information will be provided to assist you in planning your trip. **Do not make airline arrangements until you have been notified by Explore Guatemala that the group has "made".**

#### Explore Guatemala

**October 24 – November 2, 2009**

**Tel/Fax 210-599-8468**

**e-mail:** [registrar@exploreguatemala.com](mailto:registrar@exploreguatemala.com)

**web site:** [www.exploreguatemala.com](http://www.exploreguatemala.com)

P.O. BOX 17217, San Antonio, TX 78217

#### Registration Request

Name as it appears on your passport: \_\_\_\_\_

Name you go by: \_\_\_\_\_

Passport Number (**Current passport required**): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: M/F \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical/dietary considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am on my own but wish to share a room.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a smoker.

\_\_\_\_\_ I prefer the single supplement charge.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tikal Maya Ruins Tour add-on (Oct 23-24)

Enclosed is check/money order  
**payable to Explore Guatemala, L.L.C.**

Deposit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or Total Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**X** \_\_\_\_\_

(indicates you have read our Terms and Conditions available on our website)



## Guatemala Cultural Tour

### With All Saints Day Celebration

Oct 24 - Nov 2, 2009

Tikal Maya Ruins Add-on Tour – Oct 23 - 24, 2009

### Tikal Option October 23 - 24, 2009

**Fri 23rd:** Arrive Guatemala City, 5:30 PM flight to Flores. (D)

**Sat 24th:** Spend a day of awe and fascination in the Maya ruins of Tikal. Return to Guatemala City. (B,L)

### Cultural Tour Oct 24 – Nov 2, 2009

**Sat 24th:** Fly into Guatemala City where you will be met at the airport and taken to the beautiful Hotel Vista Real in Guatemala City, overlooking volcanoes Agua and Fuego.

**Sun 25th:** A scenic drive to Comalapa, the most colorful of Maya markets and enjoy the colors, the people, and let your senses run free. Travel through the most beautiful scenery in Guatemala to Finca Los Tarrales, a private reserve with a coffee plantation, exotic flower growing operation, bird watching, and scenic trails. (B,L,D)

**Mon 26th:** After a morning exploring an authentic Guatemala Coffee Plantation, it's on to "the most beautiful lake in the world", Lake Atitlán, where you will stay at the Hotel Atitlán surrounded by beautiful lake views, botanical gardens, towering volcanoes, terraced mountainsides, and Maya villages. (B,L,D)

**Tues 27th:** Wake up to majestic volcanoes and the lake. Explore the hotel environs, hike the nature walk, ride the exhilarating "Extreme Cables" (zip line), visit the local town of Panajachel for some shopping and fun, or sit by the pool with a good book. Enjoy a luxuriant and peaceful afternoon including a soak in the large "never ending" hot tub or a vigorous swim in the pool, relaxing, painting, or exploring the beautiful Botanical Gardens of Atitlan, or a massage. (B,L,D)

**Wed 28th:** Take leisurely boat ride with a stop at the scenic village of Santiago and shopping in the artists' colony. Visit the unique home (featured in Architectural Digest Aug 2002) of Candis Krummel, built in the traditional style of Tz'utujil architecture, then enjoy a delicious traditional Tz'utujil gourmet festive feast. This will be an experience you will not soon forget. (B,L,D)

**Thurs 29th:** Travel to the world famous Chichicastenango market where you will find colorful and exciting commerce and the best place in the country to buy textiles and handicrafts. Then, travel to the colonial city of Antigua where you will feel the romantic ambiance of its flower-filled courtyards, its narrow cobbled streets, and Spanish architecture. (B)

**Fri 30th:** Daylight in Antigua breaks upon sights of bright bougainvillea, emerald volcanoes, richly textured ruins, and this remarkable Monastery/five star hotel. Learn of the rediscovery of the ancient Maya Jade mines with a visit to the Jade Factory/Museum. Enjoy the shops and sights of this magnificent colonial city. (B)

**Sat 31st:** Visit Parque La Union, Santa Clara ruins, and the Church of San Francisco, a Franciscan Order Monastery. Here you will find the tomb of recently canonized Saint Hermano Pedro de San José de Bethancourt, then explore the cobblestone streets, unique shops, Spanish architecture, and ruins of this romantic colonial jewel of a city called Antigua. (B)

**Sun 1st:** Armed with camera, it's off to the village of Pastores to observe the local celebrations of All Saints Day. Then it's on to Sumpango, renowned for kite competition and giant kites. Back in Antigua, we'll share the experiences of the day. (B,L,D)

**Mon 2nd:** Departure flights home.

### Accompanying your Workshop/Tour

**Anita Rogers** lived in Guatemala for 25 years, speaks Spanish, and was a collector of Maya weavings and Spanish Colonial antiques. She has been around the travel industry most of her life, as her family owns the beautiful Hotel Atitlán on Lake Atitlán in the Guatemala highlands. **John Korte** has traveled to Guatemala for the past 20 years. They understand local customs and business practices. They stay in the hotels, eat in the restaurants, and ride the transportation, personally experiencing every aspect of their workshop/tours. They know the "hidden treasures" as well as the little bits of information only the locals know. Their experience, relationships, and knowledge of the country allow them to provide a worry-free, life enriching travel adventure.

### Included in your Explore Guatemala Workshop:

- A superbly crafted travel experience to the most enchanting, magical land of the Maya...Guatemala.
- Travel and learn with renowned artist Jan Ledbetter.
- 10 days, 9 nights at unique, luxury hotels with most meals included (per itinerary).
- Deluxe motor coaches and private boats viewing the most scenic and colorful venues...an artists paradise.
- Hotel baggage handling, driver, and meal service tips, all entrance fees, and excursions included in itinerary.

### NOT included:

- Airfare from your hometown to Guatemala City. Our flexible plan allows you to:
  1. use your Frequent Flyer miles to obtain your own tickets
  2. **or**, purchase your tickets through your own sources
  3. **or**, call travel coordinator Gretchen of G&G Travel at 877-809-8900. Tell her you are traveling with **Explore Guatemala – Vickie VanKoten Group**. She will find the best airfare and arrange for you to arrive by the appointed time. She'll even arrange Frequent Flyer miles tickets for you.

Obviously, the sooner you make your reservation, the better the price and availability. However, **do not make airline arrangements until you have been notified by Explore Guatemala that the group has "made"**.

### Terms:

Prices:

- **\$2150** Plus airfare (based on double occupancy).
- Single room supplement: **\$450**.
- **Reservation Deposit: \$500**
- *Tikal* add-on DBL \$445, SGL \$ 495

**RESERVE NOW, GROUP SIZE LIMITED**

◆ **This trip requires a moderate amount of walking**