



Above: An early morning catch on Lake Atitlán.



Guatemala, Mexico and Belize

Quetzal Journey

This fascinating itinerary offers a rich variety of historic towns, verdant mountain scenery and Caribbean beaches, enhanced by one of the most colourful and traditional cultures alive today – that of the Maya.

Our journey has a relaxed start in **Antigua**, a peaceful town of conserved colonial elegance, with low terracotta houses lining cobbled lanes and leafy squares. Our next destination is beautiful **San Cristóbal de las Casas** in Mexico: the markets and churches are a delight to explore on foot. From here we descend a winding mountain road through coffee plantations to the Maya temples at **Palenque**, surrounded by lush tropical jungle and waterfalls.

We spend three days in colonial **Mérida**, easy-going capital of the **Yucatán Peninsula**, our base to visit the sites of further incredible Maya-Totec cities – atmospheric and mysterious Uxmal, and the sprawling site at Chichén Itzá, where giant pyramids and intricate carvings are surrounded by well-tended lawns.

Belize enjoys a joyous, Caribbean culture where reggae replaces mariachi and Creole is spoken instead of Spanish. The tiny coral island of **Caye Caulker** with its palms, hammocks and snorkelling opportunities gives us a chance to wind down before returning to Guatemala and the greatest Maya city of them all, the vast, jungle-clad **Tikal**. The mists, monkeys and myriad birdlife create a wonderful atmosphere among the towering temples and palaces. Back to the highlands and we stay beside the serene waters of **Lake Atitlán**, rimmed by ancient villages and volcanic cones, and we visit the colourful market at **Chichicastenango**. Our journey ends back in Antigua.

Itinerary 23 days, 21 nights

Day 1 Arrive Guatemala, drive **Antigua** → Day 2 At leisure in **Antigua** → Day 3 Bus to **Quetzaltenango** → Day 4 Drive to **San Cristóbal de las Casas** → Day 5 Excursion to the traditional villages of **San Juan Chamula** and **Zinacantán** → Day 6 Descend by winding road to **Palenque** → Day 7 Explore Palenque ruins → Days 8-10 From **Mérida**, visits to **Uxmal** and **Chichén Itzá** → Day 11 By road to **Belize City** → Day 12 Speedboat to **Caye Caulker** → Days 13, 14 Caye Caulker, optional snorkelling → Day 15 Boat and bus to **Tikal** → Day 16 Explore **Tikal** → Day 17 Boat excursion on Lake Petén, fly Guatemala City, **Antigua** → Days 18, 19 **Lake Atitlán**, boat trip to visit villages → Day 20 **Chichicastenango** market → Day 21 **Antigua** via **Sololá** → Day 22 UK clients depart → Day 23 Arrive UK.

For full details please request a trip dossier or download it from our website.

Right: Tikal – Probably the most spectacular ruins in the Maya world. There is abundant wildlife in the surrounding tropical vegetation.



Quetzal departure dates and prices

Code	Start UK	End UK	Land price	All flights	Total
QG405	23 Oct 04	14 Nov 04	£1210	£721	£1931
QG406	13 Nov 04	05 Dec 04	£1210	£721	£1931
QG407	18 Dec 04	09 Jan 05	£1219	£939	£2158
QG501	05 Feb 05	27 Feb 05	£1210	£726	£1936
QG502†	23 Mar 05	17 Apr 05	£1350	£873	£2223
QG503	14 May 05	05 Jun 05	£1210	£761	£1971
QG504	30 Jul 05	21 Aug 05	£1219	£873	£2092
QG505	22 Oct 05	13 Nov 05	£1210	£761	£1971
QG506	12 Nov 05	04 Dec 05	£1210	£726	£1936
QG507	17 Dec 05	08 Jan 06	£1219	£903	£2122

†QG502 coincides with Easter festival in Antigua, so is 3 nights longer

Group size: Minimum 2, maximum 16, varying between these limits.

2006 departures: 04 Feb, 12 Apr, 06 May, 29 Jul, 21 Oct, 11 Nov, 16 Dec. 2005 prices may be used, according to month, as a guide for 2006.

For details of what is included in the price please see pages 6-7.



Whoever put this journey together is to be congratulated – I can't suggest any improvements.
RH, London, Feb '04

Fiesta!

Semana Santa, or Easter Week in Antigua Guatemala is one of Latin America's great religious festivals. The streets are filled with carpets of flowers, clouds of incense and dignified processions. Join departure QG502 leaving 3 days earlier on 23 March.