

8-DAY PROGRAM



GLA GROUP TRAVEL SAMPLE ITINERARY

EXAMPLE ITINERARY ONLY: DURATION, DATES, COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES ARE CUSTOMIZABLE



GUATEMALA: Youth & Education

With its stunning landscape and ancient Maya culture, Guatemala promises adventure and the opportunity to make a mark.

OVERVIEW

In this program, you will immerse yourself in indigenous culture, colorful Maya heritage, and mountainous landscape. You'll find warm residents who are proud to share their ancient traditions. This program is based in Xela (pronounced "shay-lah")—a local nickname for the vibrant town of Quetzaltenango—a GLA base for volunteer opportunities in education and children's issues. With very little English spoken throughout the city, residents of Xela welcome volunteers to assist in their classrooms with teaching and school facility infrastructure development and beautification.

THIS ITINERARY INCLUDES:

- **8 days / 7 nights of accommodation**
- 20 community service hours
- 1 free chaperone per 10 students
- 2 expert GLA staff members
- Medical & evacuation insurance
- 12-30 students (price is per student)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- ★ Share time at a Maya school and work on infrastructure projects to make an impact on children's education
- ★ Attend a ceremony with a Maya shaman
- ★ Explore ancient archaeological ruins
- ★ Zipline through the mountains of Guatemala
- ★ Make your own chocolate

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY SERVICE

Spend your days in Xela becoming fully plugged into the local primary school and surrounding community, volunteering as an English teacher or helping refurbish the library, classrooms or other school facilities. You'll have the opportunity to be in the classroom, play games with the children during recess and work with organizations committed to improving school grounds. As you spend time volunteering, you'll also learn about social issues that affect Maya youth today.

SAMPLE ITINERARY: DAILY BREAKDOWN



DAY 1: GETTING ORIENTED

Fly into La Aurora International Airport in Guatemala City, where GLA staff will greet you. We'll drive together via van to the beautiful colonial town of Antigua, where we'll have a program orientation. We will learn about some important cultural norms in Guatemala, review the code of conduct and go over our program objectives and expectations. After dinner, we'll head to bed early and rest up after our day of travel.

DAY 2: JOURNEY TO XELA

The next morning we'll rise early to begin our journey to our "home away from home" in the small town of Xela (pronounced "shay-la"). We'll stop along the way to meet with local Maya women who will teach us the ancient customs of the Maya wedding ceremony. After the interactive presentation, you can make tortillas and see how coffee is traditionally roasted.



Next, we'll visit the ancient ruins of Iximche, the old capital of the Kaq'chikel kingdom. At the ruins, we will hear a short presentation on Maya culture by our guide, a local anthropologist. In the evening, we'll settle into our Home Base with a tasty meal.

DAY 3: COMMUNITY SERVICE ORIENTATION & PROJECTS

Our days begin with a delicious breakfast, then a community service project at the local school in Xela. We'll meet with the teachers to learn more about the socioeconomic situation of the community served by the school. Understanding the big picture will help you better make a difference in local children's lives.



Begin helping children with projects to improve their English. You can lead them in art, conversation, and learning games, and evaluate the effectiveness of the methods you and your peers choose. Depending on the school's needs, we will work on an infrastructure project where you'll get your hands dirty and contribute to the needs of the local children.

DAYS 4 - 6: SERVICE, LEARNING & ADVENTURE

We're getting into the groove of village life, and will continue with our service projects over the coming days. Volunteering daily at school will shed light on the issues unique to this country, such as education, children's issues, and



preserving indigenous culture.

In the afternoons, you'll participate in various cultural activities. Visit a colorful church in San Andres Xecul, participate in a hands-on textile workshop taught by local weavers, zipline through the forest, and enjoy natural hot springs. Dive into Maya cosmology by visiting a sacred mountain, where a local Maya shaman will share an ancient ceremony. You'll even participate in a chocolate-making workshop!

DAY 7: FINAL WRAP-UP & FAREWELL DINNER

Our group will have our final leadership workshop to tie together all our learnings; after lunch, board our vans and head back to Antigua, where you'll spend your last afternoon exploring the colonial city and doing any last-minute shopping. That night, we'll go out for a farewell dinner and celebration to reflect on our time in Guatemala.

DAY 8: DEPARTURE

After breakfast and final goodbyes, travel to the airport to begin the journey home. GLA staff will ensure you're checked in for your flight and prepared for the trip home.



TRAVEL TO GUATEMALA

GLA Home Base | Home Base is a lodge in the heart of Xela offering students a peaceful escape after long days of service and adventure. Students live in gender-segregated rooms with 2-4 bunk beds per room, depending on the size of the rooms. Bathrooms are shared and hot showers are available. Home Base is quaint and provides groups with a strong sense of community.

Food | Meals in Guatemala frequently include delicious, sweet herbal tea and homemade tortillas. Chicken, rice, and beans are staples, supplemented by vegetables and plantains. Traditional Guatemalan dishes will be the norm at Home Base, but we will occasionally have American food, like pasta and sub sandwiches.

Climate | In general, the climate in Xela can go from mild to chilly, with sporadic warm episodes. The daily high is usually reached around noon. From then on, temperatures decrease exceptionally fast into the 50s. You'll be in Guatemala during its rainy season, but on the days that it rains, expect only scattered showers.

Flights | Most group travel clients opt to travel together on the same flight, whether that be a group booking or individually-purchased tickets. GLA's partner travel agency, StudentUniverse, can be a helpful resource in finding and booking flights that meet the groups' budget and logistical requirements.

LEADERSHIP

Global Leadership Adventures started as an educational institute, so we continue to think and act like educators—not tour operators—as we deliver life-changing programs. We intentionally weave a leadership curriculum into the group's daily experience to the desired degree. Through group discussion, meaningful service, workshops, speakers, and excursions, staff guide students to reflect on program events through the lens of leadership, and celebrate outstanding examples of leaders they encounter in the local community. Lending this context to the experience creates opportunities for students to dig deep into their vision, purpose and knowledge of themselves and the world.

ABOUT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

GLA was founded in 2003 by Fred Swaniker, a native of Ghana, TED Fellow, and educational entrepreneur whose work has been praised by Barack Obama. Born as a global extension of the revolutionary African Leadership Academy, Global Leadership Adventures now operates programs centered around leadership, sustainable community service projects, and meaningful travel across Africa, Asia, Europe or the Americas. Through life-changing adventures, we strive to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

Be present

Our mission at GLA is “to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their unique role in it.” To that end, we expect GLA students to maintain high standards of personal behavior and to be open-minded. The culture may be different, sometimes shockingly so. GLA will challenge students as they are expected to work hard and be present physically and mentally for all activities. Students may get hot, dirt, and bug-bitten along the way, but their contribution can be transformative to both the community and themselves. The goal is for each student to return home having had a life-changing experience.

No tolerance

GLA has a no-tolerance policy towards drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and disruptive behavior. Those who violate or are suspected of violating this policy will be immediately dismissed from the program at the sole discretion of staff.

Flexibility & Program Changes

GLA makes every effort to offer thoughtfully crafted programs for teens and young adults. Detailed planning and exhaustive communications with partners are indispensable parts of our program development process. However, occasionally service and

activities are adjusted from session to session, due to weather, changing needs of our local community partners or various cultural celebrations and holidays. We expect participants to be open-minded and flexible, and willing to embrace the experience when plans change. GLA will communicate adjustments to group leaders with advance notice whenever possible and work together with custom group leaders to reschedule or replace activities if needed.

Mentorship & Health

GLA is not a therapy program. Our staff are highly skilled, professional, caring, and fun, but they are not licensed therapists. GLA programs can be physically and emotionally demanding, and all participants should be physically and mentally healthy. Each student and staff member will undergo a self-reported medical screening process that includes a physician sign-off to ensure that our program can safely accommodate everyone's physical and mental health needs.