

Guatemala to Panama

Written by Glenn Tester

Wednesday, 17 March 2010 03:52 - Last Updated Tuesday, 23 March 2010 23:57

Guatemala to Panama

2200 Miles



For this leg we cross many countries very quickly, 6 to be exact. So I will give a brief description of each country.

Guatemala:

After crossing the border just outside of Progreso, we head south east along dirt roads to Lego Peten Itza, a large lake in the centre north of Guatemala with over 27 Maya sites on its shores and the city of Flores on an island in its southern end .

We ride around the rim of the lake and head north to the Tikal Ruins. These are known as one of the largest Mayan sites.

Heading back south past the lake we continue on through the towns of Santa Ana, Dolores and San Luis before turning east and crossing the border into Belize.

Belize:

Our stay in Belize is a short one to say the least.

Continuing on east to the Gulf Of Honduras coast, we reach Punta Gorda. A sleepy town where tourism has only just started to touch.

Im sure a hotel with a bed and shower will be much appreciated.

Leaving the coast behind and head south west to the most southern tip of Belize and back in to Guatemala.

Guatemala:

Crossing the border just north of Modesto Mendez. We pass through Caqui Creek, across Lake De Izabel and north to Puerto Barrios, another small costal town.

Here only a short ride from the Honduras border, we cross near the town of Cacao.

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Hondorus:

Following the coast up to Puerto Cortes and Parque Nacional Jannette Kawas, the home of white sand beaches, great snorkeling and howler monkeys, will see our last swim in the Caribbean sea.

Now heading through the interior of Honduras, we follow the train line south to San Pedro Sula and then take dirt roads down to Tegucigalpa and Parque Nacional La Tigra.

The dirt roads give way to badly paved roads as we pass San Antonio de Flores, Maralica and the Nicaraguan border,

Nicaragua:

From the border we head towards the Pacific Ocean, with Chinandega and Puerto de Esparta on route.

Staying close to the coast we see volcanoes in our path as we pass Leon and flank the Lake Managua.

The volcanoes are getting larger as Granada on the shores of Lake Nicaragua will make a nice stop.

Lake Nicaragua has the island of Isla de Ometepe, which contains 2 volcanoes, one still billowing steamers of ash. Apparently beautiful at sunset.

The small town of Penas Blancas on the lake is our sight of Nicaragua as we cross the border here in to Costa Rica.

Costa Rica:

Known for its magnificent rainforests, beautiful beaches with pristine waves and fishing that promises a result.

La Cruz is our first town, just 20km's south of the border and located in Santa Rosa national Park.

Heading south along the CA1 we reach Liberia and take a hard right to venture into the highland and rainforest. We get back on to the dirt roads and ride around the base of the Orosi Volcano in Parque Nacional Guanacaste and down to the township of Upala.

Getting back on to semi decent roads we head south to Laguna De Arenal. A picturesque lake with the Arenal Volcano on its shores and a listing as one of the worlds best windsurfing spots. Should be a nice change to the saddle for a few hours.

Continuing on around the base of the volcano, the dirt roads again are our yellow brick road as we pass Las Junlas and Julas and wind south east towards Barranca and the costal town of Puntarenas.

Next stop San Jose the capital city of Costa Rica.

Continuing on through Cartago, Santa Maria, San Marcos and to the costal town of Puerto Quepos where game fishing is on the hit list.

Staying close to the coast and following the train tracks, we pass a few more towns before

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reaching the Panama Border.

Panama:

With the halfway mark in our sites, it will be a quick trip down the Carretera Interamericana Highway and in to Panama airport to load the bikes on a plane for Bogota.

Another option is to take a boat from the San Blas islands to Cartagena. The boat trip would work out about 10 days longer as we also have to get from Cartagena to Bogota. Decision to be made latter.