



TRAVEL (/TRAVEL)

Date: 06 July 2017

Escape to Nicaragua

6 Mins



Don't tell anyone but Siri Elise Dybdal just might have found your next dream [holiday \(http://www.ionmagazine.co.uk/travel\)](http://www.ionmagazine.co.uk/travel). Here's the lowdown on her secret escape to Nicaragua...

Costa Rica has long been a popular tourist destination, while neighbouring Nicaragua has remained relatively undiscovered despite rivalling it in natural beauty and offering better value for money. But with a burgeoning hotel scene now boasting chic and eco-smart retreats, the word is bound to get out soon. Here's why Nicaragua should be on your holiday hitlist.

Beautiful beaches

Whether you want great waters for surfing, snorkelling and diving or that blissful laid-back beach culture the Caribbeans do so well; Nicaragua delivers. Pacific-based San Juan del Sur offers fun, bohemian nightlife, a pretty beach and a number of great surf spots. But for the ultimate oceanside paradise, fly 70km off the coast to the Corn Islands. Big Corn and Little Corn both tempt with baby powder beaches, a hammock-friendly lifestyle and spectacular dive sites.

Dramatic landscapes

There's an impressive number of smoking volcanoes and jungle clad volcanic mountains to explore. Want to see burning lava up close? Head to the easily accessible Masaya Volcano to look right down the crater. For wildlife, go hiking at the dormant Mombacho Volcano reserve and spot sloths, monkeys and 800 species of plants. Or if you'd like more action, ash-board down the side of the active volcano Cerro Negro. Alternatively, for total volcano-relaxation, head to the 200-year-old crater lagoon Apoyo, and enjoy a warm, healing swim, surrounded by lush jungle.

Like most sites, i-on uses cookies. By continuing to browse the site you are agreeing to our use of cookies.

[Find out more about our cookies policy. \(/terms-conditions\)](#)



Stunning architecture

It is almost impossible not to fall in love with the striking and colourful colonial grandeur of Granada and Leon. Granada is the most polished of the two. Built as a show town for the Spanish imperium, it has survived pirate attacks, civil war and fire, but the facades are just as unforgettable today. Behind heavy wooden doors hide stunningly restored courtyards with galleries, elegant restaurants, bars and artisan shops. Leon is the less visited and more crumbly little brother, but there are still colonial masterpieces to be found, such as Central America's biggest cathedral. The city also has a vibrant and interesting intellectual scene attracting poets, students and artists alike.

Tropical tastes

Chances are you might have tried Mexican tacos or Argentinian empanadas, but have you heard of vigorón or quesillo – a Nicaraguan-style quesadilla? Nicaraguan food is hard to find outside the country's borders, but that is not to say you shouldn't dig in when you visit. The streets are filled with tasty and colourful foods being cooked on the spot, just waiting to be sampled. Another delight is the Nicaraguan coffee – don't miss visiting a working coffee farm for the freshest flavours. Last, but not least, there is Nicaraguan rum. The delicious Flor de Caña is the country's award-winning number one brand and this is the country for rum-lovers.

Modest bills

Compared to increasingly expensive Costa Rica, Nicaragua is still cheap. You get a lot for your money here and can travel comfortably on a low budget or, alternatively, splurge on good hotels and dining without bankrupting yourself. As tourism grows, prices will of course hike – so book your stay now!

Where to stay

To make the most of the paradise setting, check into Morgan's Rock Hacienda and Eco-Lodge, a remote resort nestled in the rainforest between the Pacific and Lake Nicaragua. Romantic residences feature huge beds, hammocks and plunge pools, all offering breathtaking coastal or forest views. And there's plenty to see from playful primates and lazy sloths to nesting turtles and beautiful macaws. From £205 per room per night, it might not be the cheapest option available, but it's certainly one of the best. www.morgansrock.com (<http://www.morgansrock.com>)

Like most sites, i-on uses cookies. By continuing to browse the site you are agreeing to our use of cookies.

[Find out more about our cookies policy. \(/terms-conditions\)](#)



Getting there

[United.com \(https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/\)](https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/) offers return flights from London Heathrow to Managua (with a stopover in Houston) from around £690 per person. Internal flights are available at www.lacostena.online.com.ni (<http://www.lacostena.online.com.ni>).

nicaragua / travel review / holiday



The best of i-on straight to your inbox, every week

Your email

SIGN ME UP

MORE FROM TRAVEL

TRAVEL (/TRAVEL)

Live like a local: Luxury holidays (/travel/news-offers/live-local-luxury-holidays)

6 Mins

Like most sites, i-on uses cookies. By continuing to browse the site you are agreeing to our use of cookies. They say if you really want to get to know a city, you should live like a local. So for your next holiday, forget checking into a generic chain... [Find out more about our cookies policy. \(/terms-conditions\)](#)

[onefinestay](#) / [holidays](#) / [travel](#)[TRAVEL \(/TRAVEL\)](#)

Best of both worlds at Gamefield (/travel/uk-breaks/best-both-worlds-gamefield)

6 Mins

Want the luxury of a five-star hotel with the freedom of a self-catering rental? Look no further... Carrie Mitchell summons her girl gang for a few blissful days living like...

[gamefield](#) / [perthshire](#) / [travel review](#)[TRAVEL \(/TRAVEL\)](#)

Family adventures at Mains of Taymouth Country Estate (/travel/uk-breaks/family-adventures-mains-taymouth-country-estate)

5 Mins

Taking four kids on holiday might sound like hard work but Laura Wood finds it's not so taxing at Mains of Taymouth Country Estate in Kenmore. "Look at the size...

[mains of taymouth](#) / [family holiday](#) / [travel review](#)[TRAVEL \(/TRAVEL\)](#)

Aikwood Tower – the height of luxury (/travel/uk-breaks/aikwood-tower-height-luxury)

5 Mins

New mum Nicky Howden embarks on her first holiday en famille at the rather grand Aikwood Tower in the Scottish Borders. The wish list was admittedly pretty long: a luxurious,...

[aikwood tower](#) / [scottish borders](#) / [travel review](#)[TRAVEL \(/TRAVEL\)](#)

Dream job: Travel commissioning editor (/travel/i-on-edit/dream-job-travel-commissioning-editor)

3 Mins

Going on holiday for a living might sound like the impossible dream, but it's not. Meet The Sunday Times Travel Magazine's Lucy Thackray... I worked hard to get my job...

Like most sites, i-on uses cookies. By continuing to browse the site you are agreeing to our use of cookies.

[Travel careers interview](#)
[Find out more about our cookies policy. \(/terms-conditions\)](#)