



Steph's Quick Budget Fact Sheet

Guatemala - Semuc Champey (Lanquín)

Quick Facts

- ✓ **Capital:** Guatemala City
- ✓ **Language:** Spanish, 21 Maya languages (Here: Q'eqchi), Xinca, Garifuna.
- ✓ **Population:** ± 17000
- ✓ **Population:** ± 208
- ✓ **Currency:** Quetzales
- ✓ **Country code:** +502
- ✓ **Visa:** Fore some countries, [check here!](#)
- ✓ **Alarm codes:** 110 (police) / 123 (fire) / 120 (ambulance)
- ✓ **Vaccinations:** Hep-A / Hep-B / Typhoid / Yellow fever / DTP / Malaria prevention



History Recap Over 1 Drink

[Maya culture](#). 1523-24: Spanish colonize Mayas. 1821: Independent → joins Mexican empire. '23: Part of United Provinces of Central America. '39: Fully independent. '44-65: Dictator Carrera. '73: Pres Rufino-1931: Ubico-'44: Arevalo-'51: Arbenz. '54: US backed coup: Castillo (because: Arbenz's nationalization of plantations of United Fruit Company). '60: Start Civil War: Genocide Mayas/violations human rights → 200,000 killed/disappeared. '63: Assassination Castillo → Peralta. '66: Pres Mendez-'70: Arena → eliminate left-wingers: 50,000+ deaths. '76: 27000 killed by earthquake. '81: 11000 killed by death squads & soldiers in response to growing anti-government guerrilla activity. '82: Military coup Rios Mont. '83: Coup Mejia Victores: Amnesty for guerrillas. '85: Pres Cerezo Arevalo-'91: Serrano Elias: Diplomatic relations restored with Belize (territorial claims) → '93: Pres Carpio. '94: Peace talks government & rebels. '95: Rebels ceasefire. Human rights abuses. '96: Pres Arzu → peace agreement with rebels, ending 36 years of civil war. 2000: Pres Portillo (corrupt). '03: Pres Berger. Free trade agreement with US (+ES/Nica/Hond). '04: Army cuts. Compensation paid to Civil War victims. '05: Stan tropical storm, hundreds killed. '07: Pres Colom. '10: Pacaya erupts. Drugs trafficking. '15: Pres Maldonado.

Travel Seasons

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dry												
Wet/Hurricane												
Best	high	season	high	season								high
Budget												

Altitude: 320m. Climate: Tropical, very hot.

Bucket List For Free

- ☺ Stroll around town for a unique sneak-peak in traditional Maya culture.
- ☺ Salto del Cabro waterfalls.

Sleep Cheap

- ❖ Don't book anything. It's cheaper to ask around in town and decide what hostel is your style (around Q50).
- ❖ Ask around for Bruce. He charges Q25 per night.
- ❖ [Couchsurfing](#) / [House-sitting](#) / [WorkAway](#).

Worth The Extra \$€¥

- 👍 The reason you are here: Semuc Champey. Jump in the back of a truck (\$2 each way, shouldn't cost more) that takes you to the entrance. Walking takes 2,5 hours. You absolutely don't need a guide or tour, the trails are well-indicated. Don't miss El Mirador.
- 👍 K'an Ba Cave tour / Grutas de Lanquin.
- 👍 River tubing down Río Cahabon (rent a tube).
- 👍 Chocolate / chili-making workshop.

Festivals

- ☼ Semana Santa: Mar/Apr (Easter).
- ☼ Independence Day: 15-Sep.
- ☼ Revolution 1944 Day: 20-Oct.

Mama Said

☠ Watch your bag, buy a lock. Don't flash your valuables. Don't leave your bag on the waterside when swimming nor trust the lockers (stuff gets stolen out of there).

☠ Avoid walking around alone at night.

☠ Narcotrafficking is big in Guatemala and most murders are related to drugs trade. In short: Don't get involved.

☠ There are ATM's, but not all work. Take money from the previous town.

☠ Bring bug spray.

Next?

→ In Guatemala: Rio Dulce, Tikal (Flores), Antigua, Guatemala City.

→ International destinations closeby: Belize, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras.

Nights Best Spent

- ◆ El Muro Pub, Calle Principal.
- ◆ Zephyr Lodge bar, Alta Verapaz.

Budget Bites

⌘ Markets: Around Parque Central. At night you can find streetfood here.

⌘ Cheap supermarket: Little *tiendas* and bakeries around town.

⌘ Guatemala's streetfood & cheap *comedores*: Pepián (meat stew), pupusas (corn tortillas filled with cheese or meat), elote (corn), tacos, garnachas / tostadas (fried tortillas with meat and salad), rellenitos (plantains stuffed with beans), tamales (stuffed corn dough), bunuelos (sweet), salshichas (sausage), chicharones (pork), cheveres (hot dogs), hamburgers, chile releno, mango with lime, ceviche, kilos of fried chicken, enchilada and burrito. Everything served with beans and guacamole.

Free-Riding?

■ Within the small centre everything is walkable.

■ Pick-up trucks run in between Lanquin and Semuc Champey. Don't believe people who tell you there won't be trucks driving back at the end of the day, that's just a way to let you pay more.

■ Shuttles run to Río Dulce or Antigua. You can save money by taking a bus to Guatemala City (leave early, traffic's a bitch here), there take the [Monja Blanca](#) (8 avenida, zona 1) bus to Cobán and there a bus to Lanquin. Minibuses connect neighbouring villages.

■ Hitch-hiking is common. I did it as an obvious foreign woman travelling alone, without any problems. However, there's always a risk.

Tip: Download the Triposo Guatemala app for offline maps and landmark descriptions & more, or load Google Maps when you have wifi and leave it open, you will still be able to use it offline.

The Earth Becomes My Throne