



# Steph's Quick Budget Fact Sheet

## Guatemala - Isla de Flores / Tikal

### Quick Facts

- ✓ **Capital:** Guatemala City
- ✓ **Language:** Spanish, 21 Maya languages, Xinca, Garifuna.
- ✓ **Population:** ± 14000
- ✓ **Currency:** Quetzales
- ✓ **Country code:** +502
- ✓ **Visa:** For 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												
Budget												

Altitude: 275m. Climate: Tropical, very hot.

### Bucket List For Free

- ☺ Visit the cathedral and its scenic plaza in front.
- ☺ Try some new local fruits at the dirt-cheap market of Santa Elena (better deal than buying food in Flores).

👍 [ARCAS wildlife protection](#) / [Las Guacamayas](#).

👍 Jorge's Rope Swing.

👍 Ixpanpajul Natural Park (zipline etc.)

👍 Uaxactun ruins.

### Worth The Extra \$€¥

👍 The reason you are here: [Tikal](#). Even though it's 44km away from Isla de Flores and it might be easier to stay in El Remate instead, it's easy to reach. Please don't waste your money on a tour, the entrance is expensive enough: Walk to the Santa Elena market (you really don't need a tuktuk) and take a cheap minibus. Chickenbuses leave for Tikal too, but they are way slower. I hitch-hiked as a woman alone and was fine too, up to you.

👍 Aktun'Kan cave.

## Festivals

- ☼ Independence Day: 15-Sep.
- ☼ Revolution 1944 Day: 20-Oct.

## Budget Bites

⌘ Stroll down the waterfront until you see many food stalls. Excellent streetfood for an even better price!

⌘ Cheap supermarket: Dispensa Familiar (Santa Elena, passed the bridge). Or buy everything at the Santa Elena market.

⌘ 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.

## Next?

- ➔ In Guatemala: Rio Dulce, Semuc Champey (Lanquin), El Mirador.
- ➔ International destinations closeby: Belize, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras.

## Sleep Cheap

- ❖ Mirador del Lago, +50278675253, Calle 15 de Septiembre.
- ❖ Los Amigos, +50278675075, Calle Central.
- ❖ Instead, go [Couchsurfing](#) (on a boat) or [house-sitting](#)! Also check [WorkAway](#).

## Nights Best Spent

- ◆ Hostel Los Amigos bar, Calle Central.
- ◆ Sky Bar, Calle Union 20.
- ◆ Casa de Palmas, Calle Sur.

## Mama Said

- ☠ Watch your bag, buy a lock. Don't flash your valuables.
- ☠ Avoid walking around alone at night, especially passed the bridge.
- ☠ Narcotraficking is big in Guatemala and most murders are related to drugs trade. In short: Don't get involved.
- ☠ There are not many ATM's on the island and they get empty quickly. There's one in the Dispensa Familiar supermarket just across the bridge.
- ☠ Bring bug spray to Tikal. It's an infestation.

## Free-Riding?

- Within the small centre everything is walkable. Biking is possible with a rental bike.
- Taxi's are quite overpriced and unnecessary. The same goes for tuktuks, you really don't need them for the minimal distances here.
- Instead of an expensive shuttle, save money by taking a bus from the Santa Elena terminal (market). From there they leave to everywhere in the country. Recommended: Gain information about the departure times 1 day before to verify, as they are subject to change (not necessary to buy a ticket in advance).

■ 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