El Salvador - A Land of Volcanoes

Trip Code: ESE

Version:

WALK & TREK	GUIDED GROUP	5 MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the diverse volcanic landscapes of El Salvador, hiking on **8 volcanoes** across the country
- Summit the highest volcano, Santa Ana (2,381m) and stand on El Pital (2,730m) El Salvador's highest point
- Relax in the thermal pools of Santa Teresa Hot Springs after rewarding days on the trail
- Enjoy a boat trip across the Gulf of Fonseca to Isla Zacatillo

- Discover the colourful colonial streets of Suchitoto and learn about the country's rich culture
- Finish your adventure beside the Pacific Ocean with time to relax at El Cuco

AT A GLANCE

- 9 days walking
- 3 days sightseeing and beach R&R
- Max. altitude 2730 metres
- Join at San Salvador

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

Overlooked by many travellers to Central America, El Salvador is the smallest country in the region and one of the most delightful. Our superb 2 week walking holiday takes us on journey around the country, walking on 8 of its 20 volcanoes as we go. Along our way, we also take time out to experience El Salvador's colourful colonial towns, cloud forest trails, Maya ruins, coffee plantations and stunning beaches. Starting in El Boqueron National Park, we take the short walk to the viewpoint on San Salvador's namesake volcano (1,800m). Heading east to the Los Volcanes National Park, we hike up the perfect cone of Volcan Izalco (1,952m) and scale San Salvador's highest volcano, Llamatepec (Santa Ana) (2,381m). Journeying north to the Honduras border, we reach the country's highest point at El Pital (2,730m), where on a clear day, we'll be rewarded with views over into Honduras and across to the volcanoes of Pacaya and Agua in Guatemala. Next, we spend 2 days in and around the delightful colonial town of Suchitoto on Lake Suchitlan, where we enjoy a well earned relaxation day before hiking on the slopes of the dormant Volcan Guazapa (1,438m). The coffee farming towns of Berlin and Alegria, nestled in the Eastern Highlands, will provide our next base as we climb Tecapa (1,593m) and Chinchontepec (San Vincente) (2,173m). Onwards, we climb the stunning beautiful cone of Volcan Chaparrastique (2,129m). After a day spent exploring the serene islands in the Gulf of Fonseca, we tackle our last volcano, Chonchagua (1225m). We end with a a day relaxing on the beach, a perfect end to our Central America adventure.

Is this holiday for you?

All the walks are day excursions, and many of them are completed in the morning, so an average of 4-5 hrs walking with some longer days of around 8 hrs (depending on the fitness level of the group). It is possible to opt out of any of the walks if you would prefer a rest day. Generally the walks follow established trails through coffee plantations, forest or jungle. However, some of the ascents of the volcano cones themselves present quite challenging sections due to the climate, steep terrain and much of the underfoot surface consisting of ash. Temperatures can be hot and humid in the lower and coastal region. However the temperature on walks at higher altitudes will be a little cooler. There is a mix of accommodation from comfortable hotels and homely casas, and 1 night camping at a very comfortable fixed glamping site. Please note that whilst walking in National Parks it is obligatory to be accompanied by a guide and a police escort is also provided by the park.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualifed tour leader
- Single timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- National park entrance fees
- All activities/excursions mentioned unless specified as 'optional'

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional
- Tips
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in San Salvador.

A single transfer from / to San Salvador Airport is provided on the first / last day of the land only itinerary.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 6 lunches and 1 dinner are included in the holiday price.

Food & Water

Drinking Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

The cuisine of El Salvador is similar to that of its neighbours, with a strong reliance on indigenous foods like corn, beans, squash and tomatoes. The influence of Mayan culture as well as the kitchens of Spain have created a diverse and tasty cuisine. Probably the most ubiquitous of all El Salvador dishes is the pupusa - thick, corn tortillas filled with anything from meats to cheeses to refried beans to pork rinds. Pupusas can be purchased from pupuseras, as well as streetside vendors.

Accommodation

In San Salvador, Ataco, La Palma, Suchitoto and La Union you will stay at comfortable hotels with en suite rooms. In Cerro Verde National Park we have 1 night at a fixed camp with shared bathrooms and great view to the crater of Volcano Izalco. We will also have 2 nights at a neo-colonial style guesthouse in rooms with private bathrooms in Berlin on the slopes of Tecapa Volcano.

Our last 2 nights are at a simple beach resort with swimming pool in El Cuco. Please note that it is common for these simple resorts to shut down in the evening with staff going home after dinner has been served; we should be prepared to enjoy some quiet evenings - all part of the laid back coastal life. A pack of cards and a good book are excellent packing ideas!

All accommodation is based on twin sharing. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired with another solo traveller of the same sex.

Single rooms are available for an additional cost, with the exception of the two nights at El Cuco (Days 12 and 13). There are only a limited number of single rooms available on Days 9 and 10 so single occupancy on these nights willl be dependent on group size and availability. Please contact the KE office for details.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to moderately high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 2500 metres. Most people will have no difficulty with this level of altitude but before coming on the holiday, we recommend you read the advice on trekking at high altitude. You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

Spending Money

A total of US $250- $300 should be sufficient to cover your personal spending including the non-included meals (5-10USD per meal), tips for drivers and trek staff, miscellaneous expenditure on drinks, souvenirs etc, and airport departure tax (if applicable - this is dependent on which airline you fly with as it maybe included in your ticket). It is possible to use credit and debit cards to withdraw money from ATMs in most large towns. If you are bringing your travel money with you we recommend you bring this in cash US dollars. OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES EL CUCO: Please note that prices are subject to change Kayaking: $40 per person for 2.5hrs Community sea turtle conservation project at Playa El Icacal: £45 per person Surf Lesson: $40 per person for 1.5hrs, including surf board and instructor

Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying ‘thank you’ to your local guides and drivers. They do not form part of their wages. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in and any tips they receive are seen as a personal thank you from group members. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that was given. We recommend that you give a tip to your guide and driver if you feel that their services have met your satisfaction. The actual amount is up to you but we suggest that you do this as a group rather than on an individual basis.

Baggage Allowance

There is no restriction on the weight of your trek bag other than that imposed by your airline. However, you will have a more comfortable travel experience if you pack as light as possible. We do ask you to restrict your luggage to one main bag and a small day pack.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRANSITING THROUGH THE USA

If your flights pass through the USA, even if only in transit, you will require either a visa or an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation). Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can apply for an ESTA under certain conditions*. This must be done online via https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov, no later than 72 hours prior to travel and applies whether entering the country by sea or by air. You will need to have a biometric passport to apply for an ESTA. The fee is currently US$40 *(as of 30/09/25).* Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely be refused boarding.

*If you have visited Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen since 2011 or have dual nationality with any of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. You will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate instead. Additionally, if you have travelled to or have been in Cuba since the 12th of January 2021, you will not be eligible for an ESTA visa waiver and will need to apply for a US visa. You should consult the US State Department website to determine which you will need.

When completing the ESTA application form you will be asked to enter your 'Point of Contact' information. This is not required if you are only transiting through the USA.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRANSITING THROUGH CANADA

UK citizens will require an ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation), and you must get this before boarding any Canada-bound aircraft or ship, or entering on a land border. The fee is CAD$7 and you should apply for it at http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta-start.asp. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office

Entry requirements can change regularly so please ensure you have the most up to date information before travelling by checking visa entry requirements at the relevant embassy in your country of residence: (US Embassy in London: http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html)

Visa El Salvador

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The unit of currency in El Salvador is the US Dollar.

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on an walking holiday getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. Regular walking in hill country is the best preparation but if this is not possible, then running and swimming are also good for developing better stamina and general cardio-vascular fitness.

Climate

El Salvador has a tropical climate with pronounced wet and dry seasons. Almost all the annual rainfall occurs during the rainy season which extends from May to October. From November through to April, the northeast trade winds control weather patterns. During these months, air flowing from the Caribbean has had most of the precipitation removed by the mountains of Honduras and by the time this air reaches El Salvador, it is dry, hot, and hazy. This season is known locally as verano, or summer. Temperatures vary little with the season and elevation is the primary determinant of temperature. The Pacific lowlands are the hottest region, with annual averages ranging from 25°C to 29°C. San Salvador is representative of the central plateau, with an annual average temperature of 23°C and absolute high and low readings of 38°C and 7°C, respectively. Mountain areas are the coolest, with annual averages from 12°C to 23°C and minimum temperatures sometimes approaching freezing.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

El Salvador. Footprint Focus Guide/Handbook (2015): Richard Arghiris
Explorer's Guide El Salvador: Paige R. Penland
The History of El Salvador: Christopher M. White

Maps

Nicaragua - Honduras - El Salvador; Reise-Know-How Verlag
Indexed, waterproof and tear-resistant road map of Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador at 1:650,000 with topographic and tourist information, published by Reise Know-How as part of their highly acclaimed World Mapping Project. The map is double-sided to provide the best balance between a good scale and a convenient size sheet.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You must bring the following items:

Walking boots
Trainers for travelling
Socks
Trekking trousers
Underwear
Base layer shirts
Casual shirts and/or T-shirts
2 layers of fleece - warm jumper and jacket
Waterproof jacket
Lightweight waterproof over-trousers
Sunhat
Warm hat
Warm gloves
Sunglasses
Daypack 25 litres
Sleeping bag liner
Headtorch and spare batteries
Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
Water bottles 1 Litre x 2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
Water purification tablets
Travel clothes
Washbag and toiletries
Antibacterial handwash
Small padlock
Insect repellent
Basic First Aid Kit including the following: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite). Glucose tablets and multi-vitamin tablets are also a good idea

The following items are optional:

Sandals
Spare laces
Gaiters
Shorts
Beach towel
Swimwear
Trekking poles
Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
Camera
Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

NOTE:

Sleeping mats and sleeping bags are provided in El Salvador. Please do bring a sheet sleeping bag for your comfort and hygiene.

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary joining in San Salvador. For clients making their own flight arrangements, Comalapa International Airport (San Salvador) is the most convenient for transfers to the group hotel. Please refer to Joining Arrangements and Transfers for further details.

Flights SHOULD NOT be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London (Heathrow) to San Salvador with United Airlines. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the morning, arriving in the evening (Day 1 of the itinerary). Return flights will depart in the afternoon of the last day of the Land Only itinerary, arriving in the UK the following morning. Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Please be aware that there are often only a limited number of seats available at the advertised price. To avoid paying flight supplements, we recommend that you book as early as possible, especially during peak times. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures, we will contact you with an alternative quote. Please note that you may be asked to pay for your flights in advance of your final holiday balance. Note that if you book a package including flights with KE you will benefit from full financial protection.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

This walking holiday is unique to KE. Find out for yourself why we rate this tiny pocket of volcanoes, verdant coffee plantations and stunning remote beaches as one of our favourite destinations in Central America. We summit 7 of the 8 volcanoes and explore the beautiful colonial cities and islands, as well as soak up the charm and warmth of this fabulous country.Journalist Martin Symington recently travelled with us to El Salvador for Wanderlust Magazine, read the article here.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 25/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change