

The Land of Lakes and Volcanoes Nicaragua



● Mr. Mendez

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Although geographically Nicaragua is 3.5 folds Taiwan size our population density is quite low, we have about 5 million of inhabitants in comparison with the 23 millions of Taiwan. The main religion is Roman Catholic and our currency is Cordoba Oro (1 Cordoba Oro is equivalent to 1.22 New Taiwan Dollar).

My country is the largest country of Central America. It borders Honduras in the north and Costa Rica in the south and it houses two big lakes: Lake Managua and Lake Nicaragua (also known as Cocibolca) and many rivers and beautiful lagoons where you can practice extreme sports such as: paragliding, kayaking or just swimming.

Although I come from Leon, in the Pacific North of the country, one of my favorite areas is the Pacific south where Cocibolca is located, this huge lake was confused with a sea by Spanish conquerors who came here more than 500 years ago, but surprisingly many foreigners still get confused because its huge size. There are other astonishing secrets in this lake: is the bigger of Central America, inside it has a huge island with two active volcanoes and it is one of few with fresh-water sharks in the world!

Nicaragua is known as a country of political instability, wars, and revolution. The dictatorship of the Somoza family in the first half of the 20th century, the revolution





● Traditional Nicaraguan musical instrument



● Dust carpets shown during Holy week

of the Sandinistas and the war against the Contras, which were funded by the US, helped establishing this image. Fortunately, these days are over and we live in peace and democracy since 1990.

Although the bad reputation prevails, Nicaragua nowadays profiles itself as one of the least dangerous countries of Latin America, in Leon, the second largest and important city of the country, we have a small crime rate, conversely this city is well known for the fervor which celebrates religious traditions such as Eastern. Leonese (citizen from Leon) are proud of our sawdust carpets, colorful carpets that we make on Good Friday to represent biblical passages such as

the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. I have the good fortune of growing up in a special street know as "Sawdust Carpets Street"

Poverty is still striking and the country does not have a tourism sector that is as well developed as in its neighboring countries, but we think this is an advantage because Nicaragua's unexploited side allows tourists to relax on quiet beaches and approach wildlife without tumbling over other tourists.

Managua, Nicaragua's capital city, is equipped with all modern facilities. Cinemas, shopping malls, and high class hotels can be found in the capital. In colonial cities like Leon or Granada you can still find ancient,



● Leon, Nicaragua is known as a Catholic city, it has 18 large Catholic churches.



● Leon Cathedral , a UNESCO World Heritage site

colorful houses, charming little streets, and lively plazas. Two small islands in the Atlantic Ocean –The Corn Islands - offer everything for a pleasant Caribbean vacation: white beaches, tropical blue waters, and magnificent coral reefs. Every traveler can find his favorite place in Nicaragua!

Bordering two oceans, Nicaragua has a lot of beach to offer. On the Pacific side you can find many hilled beaches and bays that offer great swimming, surfing, fishing, and other water sport

possibilities. From many Pacific beaches you can see the sun set which can be truly beautiful. My home city is only 15 to 20 minutes from Poneloya a Pacific beach where I used to go on weekend to enjoy sunset.

Even more tropical settings can be found at the Caribbean coast. Here you can find the turquoise water, white sand, and green palms that you see in the movies. Two small islands in the Caribbean called the Corn Islands offer many options for tourists. A little more off-road lie the Pearl Keys. This group of tiny islets can be visited from Pearl lagoon



● Taxidermied animals sold at Nicaraguan markets



• Traditional Nicaraguan clothing




• Dancing at a traditional festival

located north from the most important city at the Nicaraguan Caribbean coast, Bluefields.

Nicaragua is often referred to as 'the country of Lakes and Volcanoes'. When you look at the map, you can understand why. Not only do many lakes and lagoons exist throughout the country, an impressive line of volcanoes also runs from north to south. There is a great variety among these volcanoes; some have huge smoking crater mouths whereas other volcanoes were blown away in violent eruptions thousands of years ago, leaving

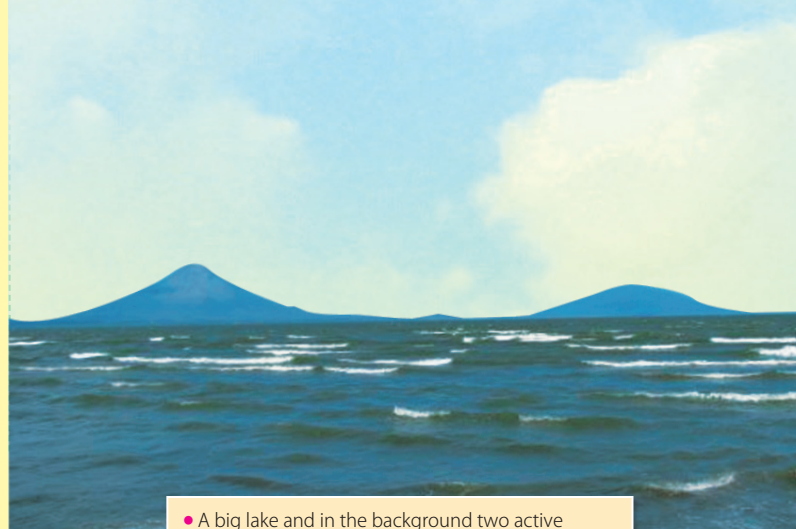
behind nothing more than a tranquil crater lake.

Many of these volcanoes offer some great possibilities for tourists. You can climb active and dormant volcanoes, swim in crater lakes, walk through forested slopes, and peek over the rim into the crater of a volcano.

Come to my country and enjoy the warm of its people and stunning nature. 



• Petroglyphs from South Caribbean Nicaragua



• A big lake and in the background two active volcanoes on an island in the middle of the lake