



By Valerie Jones and Kim Floyd

2 Girls Who Travel

Ever since we returned from our trip to Guatemala, we've been singing the country's praises. We flew into Guatemala City, stayed the night there and spent our remaining three days in the beautiful city of Antigua. We didn't know much beforehand about Guatemala, other than it's in Central America and bordered on the north and west by Mexico – a country we frequent quite regularly.

But we found a cheap flight and decided to give it a go. After a little bit of research, we saw that Guatemala is home to many volcanoes and knew if nothing else, we definitely wanted to visit a volcano! Keep reading for a recap of our whirlwind trip to Guatemala!



Guatemala City

We didn't spend long here, but if you're like us and have a late flight in, it's definitely better to stay the night in Guatemala City and explore more of Guatemala the following day.

Our hotel was The Hilton Garden Inn in Guatemala City and here's why we recommend it:

- it's located just a few miles from La Aurora International Airport
- the hotel is clean with modern décor
- it offers free airport shuttle transfers
- it offers free Wi-Fi

While some advise not to wander around Guatemala City late at night or by yourself, we found no problems walking around the next morning to grab some coffee.



Antigua

We booked a transfer from our Guatemala City hotel to our Airbnb in Antigua. This is truly a beautiful city – one we did NOT want to leave! Part of the appeal was the lovely Airbnb we stayed at ... it's called The House of Pots. Our Airbnb hosts, Tom and Paul, owned and operated an art gallery in Honolulu, Hawaii for 10 years before moving to Guatemala where they purchased a home and quickly started adding their artistic flair to it. From there La Casa de las Ollas (House of the Cooking Pots) was born!

The house was absolutely beautiful, charming and



cozy. The wood utilized for the ceiling is a local wood called conacaste, known for its beautiful grain and natural repellent against insects. The furniture and artwork are all from Tom and Paul's own personal collection. The furnishings are mostly vintage Guatemalan and exhibit the unique character of the country. There are paintings of Antigua by local artist Alfredo Garcia Gil and textiles that are Tzutes or ceremonial textiles from Chichicastenango; and are about 50-60 years old.

Now as for what we did in Antigua... a lot!

Just a few steps away from our Airbnb was a new artsy restaurant called L'Osteria Antigua, located inside The

Good Hotel. We ate here twice – for lunch and breakfast – and were pleased with their alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks as well as their cuisine.

Another restaurant we visited more than once was the hip, late-night taco spot called Ta'Cool. This is where you should go for your street tacos and margaritas.

Our Airbnb was in the perfect location in Antigua – walking distance to central park where you have your choice of restaurants and shopping. We haggled prices in a local market, visited a museum and ate a full lunch with drinks for just over \$5 USD!

But probably the most exciting part of our trip was our ATTEMPT to hike a volcano. We say attempt because just five minutes in, we realized it was more strenuous than we anticipated!



Luckily, on the tour we booked, travelers can pay for a horse to ride up the volcano – definitely worth the money! And this tour was amazing – if just for the view of the volcano alone! And it didn't hurt that as part of the full-day tour, we got to eat lunch at a swanky resort nearby and relax in the hot springs!

For more pictures, details and tips about traveling to Guatemala, be sure to visit www.2girlswhotravel.com and subscribe to our blog so you can keep up with all of our adventures!