



## **THE TOP HONDURAS EXPERIENCES FOR EACH TRAVELER TYPE**

*Archeological wonders, sublime diving, rare birds, and jungle explorations entice intrepid travelers of all types to explore this tropical vacation destination*

**New York, N.Y. – November 29, 2022:** As winter creeps up on the Northern Hemisphere, dreams of a tropical vacation entices travelers of all types. Honduras, at its peak dry season from December to April, invites families, friends and solo travelers to escape the cold and enjoy a warm-weather destination offering unique, affordable one-of-a-kind experiences for divers, history buffs, adventure seekers and wildlife lovers alike.

Located in the heart of Central America, Honduras boasts an environment rich in biodiversity – with an array of ecosystems including dense rainforests, towering cloud forests, rushing rivers and the largest coral reef in the Americas. The Honduran Conservation Coalition, a network of scientists and conservationists dedicated to community-based conservation, sustainable development, and biological and social research in Mesoamerica, has taken it upon themselves to protect Honduran biodiversity – and even encourages visitors to participate. All this adds up to outdoor adventures and communing with the natural world, where there is something for everyone, including the:

### **Scuba Diving Enthusiast**

The Bay Islands, located north of the mainland, are known for marine life, the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef system, and water adventures like SCUBA diving and snorkeling. The three most famous dive spots in the Bay Islands – Utila, Roatán and Guanaja archipelagos – invite the intrepid diver to discover underwater worlds, swim with whale sharks and explore hard and soft coral reefs, to name a few. Enjoy a close encounter with coral formations or deep-dive 2,000 feet to site bluntnose shark. SCUBA-certified visitors to Roatán are invited to participate in the Coral Restoration Program at Roatán Marine Park, a community-based, non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of Honduras' marine and coastal ecosystems.

### **Wildlife Lover**

Honduras cherishes its wild lands and wildlife and works hard to preserve it. Since near-deforestation of the land in the 1970s, Hondurans have made it their business to restore habitat for thousands of species of birds and mammals. Hang out with a sloth in an animal sanctuary. Hike among monkeys, jaguar, tapirs, deer and other native wildlife in the Central American lowland rainforest. Outside the colonial town of Gracias, visit Celaque National Park. The 65,000-acre park offers multiday hikes through the cloud forest to the pristine summit of Cerros

Las Minas. Honduras also boasts a marvelous bird population. From the rare species like the quetzal and the wine-throated hummingbird to the endangered macaw, more than 800 bird species call Honduras home. Watch for the scarlet macaws that fly freely throughout the 335 square-mile area known as The Sacred Valley of the Scarlet Macaw.

### **Adventure Junkie**

In addition to being an eco-friendly country, Honduras has its share of adventure vacations. Not into diving but still love underwater creatures? Tela Coral Aquarium entices travelers with an up close view of the nation's magnificent coral reefs. Horseback riding tours are also popular. From three-hour to half-day tours, visitors can gain a new perspective of the Mayan ruins, indigenous communities and beach front on horseback. A daylong tour that covers La Ceiba beach and the nearby forest is also available. For adventure junkies seeking an adrenaline rush, white-water rafting along the Rio Cangrejal and its class III to V rapids will get the blood pumping. Zipline La Campa canopy in Celaque National Park, the canopy in Pico Bonito, La Ceiba, Atlántida or Cataratas Pulhapunzak to get a bird's-eye view, at a fast clip, above the tree line, through the darkened forest or over swiftly flowing rivers and waterfalls.

### **History Buff**

Copán Ruins, located in western Honduras near the Guatemalan border, was one of the most influential cities of the ancient Mayan world. At Copán Archeological Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, history-enthusiasts set their inner archeologist free to explore some of the best sites of Mayan civilization still in existence. Stop by the Tea & Chocolate Place in adjacent Copán Ruinas to enjoy traditional hot chocolate and chat with owner and archeologist David Sedat, a renowned expert on Mayan culture. If soaking in natural hot springs, strolling through botanical gardens and enjoying breathtaking views from a hilltop fortress sounds enticing, a visit to Gracias is a must. This 500-year-old model Central American town is said to have been named by conquistadors who thanked God for delivering them to this oasis after a long, hard trek.

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### **About Honduras**

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## **TOP FIVE REASONS TO VISIT HONDURAS IN THE NEW YEAR**

*Sublime diving, abundant wildlife, archeological wonders, and more inspire travelers seeking one-of-a-kind bucket list experiences in 2023*

**New York, N.Y. – December 29, 2022:** When it comes to traveling in 2023, an increasing number of Americans are predicted to prioritize authentic, purpose-driven travel experiences as a top resolution in the new year. Whether seeking to become a more sustainable sightseer or set on discovering a new destination, Honduras, a country with diverse landscapes and ecosystems, invites visitors to bid farewell to 2022 with the top five reasons this vibrant Central American country should be on travelers' bucket lists in 2023 and beyond.

### **Dive the Largest Coral Reef in the Americas**

For travelers seeking underwater adventures, Honduras offers plenty of opportunities as home to the largest coral reef in the Americas. The vibrant Mesoamerican Barrier Reef hugs the Bay Islands just off the mainland with 700 miles of colorful corals and more than 500 species of fish. The three most famous dive spots in the Bay Islands – Utila, Roatán and Guanaja archipelagos – entice scuba divers and snorkelers of all skill levels thanks to the spectacular reef and its close proximity to shore. Many lodges and resorts like [Barefoot Cay](#) and [Turquoise Bay](#) have on-site dive shops, and plenty of independent businesses dotting the islands offer guided snorkel tours by boat and self-guided explorations from shore. A haven for hardcore divers, Utila, the smallest of the Bay Islands is known as one of the safest and least expensive places in the world to get [PADI diving licenses](#) of all levels. The island boasts more than 80 dive sites, with whale shark sightings frequent from March to April and again in September.

### **Float Back and Relax in Natural Hot Springs**

For travelers seeking a serene and tranquil escape with health and wellness in mind, Honduras' relaxing hot springs are the perfect way to soak away the stress in naturally heated mineral baths surrounded by the destination's lush natural beauty. Near Copán, travelers can visit [Luna Jaguar Spa](#), a Mayan-influenced eco-spa dedicated to physical and mental wellbeing. Nestled in the middle of the jungle, Sambo Creek Hot Springs is a natural wonder that starts hottest at the top, gradually mixing with cool water as the pools progress down the mountain. Visitors are treated to floating fresh fruit trays in the lower pool and massage huts are also available.

### **Explore One of the Most Significant Ancient Mayan Sites**

For history and culture enthusiasts yearning to discover archeological treasures, [Copán Ruins](#), located in western Honduras near the Guatemalan border, is home to one of the most influential cities of the ancient Mayan world. At Copán Archeological Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, visitors can explore some of the best sites of Mayan civilization still in existence. Major areas of

interest include The Acropolis, built as an elaborate gateway to the underworld during the reign of Copán's last ruler, Yax-Pac; The Great Plaza, known for its intricate altars; the Sun Plaza, showcasing 3D carved stellae perfectly positioned in direct relation to the stars above – and the Hieroglyphic Stairway, which contains the longest known text of ancient Mayan civilization. The site also features underground tunnels accessible to visitors and an impressive sculpture museum housing some of the ruins' original structures, including a full-size replica of the Rosalila Temple, the only temple found with its original colors intact.

### **Catch a Buzz on Coffee Culture**

As the largest coffee producer in Central America and the fifth largest globally, Honduras takes its coffee and coffee culture very seriously – making it an ideal destination for the rising number of travelers seeking to feed their coffee curiosity next year. Most baristas in the country are also growers, which results in an exceptional bean to cup experience. Producing high quality beans is the main priority for Honduran coffee farmers, allowing visitors to sample coffee they may never find in North America. The majority of the country's coffee is produced in the western region including areas near Copán Ruins – where many Arabica varieties such as bourbon, caturra, typica, catuai, and pacas are grown. Coffee farms like [Finca Santa Isabel](#), home of the Welchez coffee brand, offer educational tours that guide participants through the coffee making journey.

### **Take Part in Sustainable Tourism Initiatives**

For travelers looking to lessen their carbon footprint and make sustainability a focus in 2023, Honduras' exceptional biodiversity and longstanding commitment to responsible tourism attracts eco-conscious visitors around the world, with many conservation initiatives in which visitors can participate. SCUBA-certified sightseers to Roatán are invited to take part in the Coral Restoration Program at [Roatán Marine Park](#), a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of Honduras' marine and coastal ecosystems. [Macaw Mountain](#), a bird rescue, rehabilitation, and release center in Copán, offers visitors the chance to learn more about the scarlet macaw, Honduras' national bird, which has become endangered due to the illegal wildlife trade. Visitors to the aviary can observe more than 200 birds up close – and spot free-flying scarlet macaws above the park and throughout a 335 square-mile area known as “The Sacred Valley of the Scarlet Macaw.” With its mission to spread awareness, [Tele Marine](#) – located in Atlántida on Honduras' northern Caribbean coast – is the only free public aquarium in Central America, inviting travelers to learn more about the spectacular coral reefs of Tele, while enjoying its thematic restaurant, dive center, and research facilities, all open to the public.

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### **About Honduras**

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## **TAKE A DEEP DIVE INTO HONDURAS WITH TOP SCUBA, SNORKEL AND FREEDIVING EXPERIENCES FOR THE NEW YEAR**

*From vibrant coral, massive sponges, and peaceful eel gardens to schools of tropical fish, fleets of eagle rays, and sea turtles, an underwater wonderland awaits*

**New York, N.Y. – January 17, 2023:** As home to the largest coral reef in the Americas, Honduras invites travelers to explore an underwater wonderland of abundant marine life, with its squadrons of eagle rays, schools of brightly colored fish, and vibrant coral reefs accessible for year-round visibility. The vibrant Mesoamerican Barrier Reef hugs The Bay Islands just off the mainland with 700 miles of colorful corals and more than 500 species of fish. From the deep reef crevices of Roatán and the massive whale sharks of Utila – to Guanaja’s wreck dives and the unspoiled paradise of Cayos Cochinos, travelers can diver deeper into Honduras’s natural beauty with these top diving and snorkeling experiences:

### **SCUBA DIVING & SNORKELING**

The Bay Islands are famous amongst scuba divers and snorkelers of all skill levels thanks to the spectacular reef and its close proximity to shore. The three famous dive spots in the Bay Islands – Utila, Roatán and Guanaja archipelagos – invite intrepid divers to discover underwater worlds, swim with whale sharks and explore hard and soft coral reefs. Enjoy a close encounter with coral formations or deep-dive 2,000 feet to site bluntnose shark. Many lodges and resorts like [Infinity Bay](#) and [Anthony’s Key](#) have on-site dive shops, and plenty of independent businesses such as [Roatán Divers](#) and [Clearwater Adventures](#) dotting the islands offer guided snorkel tours by boat and self-guided explorations from shore. Splash Inn Dive Resort presents a full list of the 40 most popular [Roatán dive sites](#), complete with dive site information, photos, and location details.

Mary’s Place in Roatán, one of the most popular dive sites in all of Honduras, is famous for its 100-foot volcanic canyon which gives way to an abundance of marine life, black coral trees, and giant sea fans. Southwest of Roatán and a haven for hardcore divers, Utila is known as one of the safest and least expensive places in the world to get [PADI diving licenses](#) of all levels. The island boasts more than 80 dive sites, including the sea mound of Black Hills. Utila is one of the only places on the planet where whale sharks are seen year-round, although they are most commonly seen in spring and early fall. The artificial wreck of the Jado Trader, a 260-foot freighter sunk in 1987, is Guanaja’s signature wreck dive.

The pristine Caribbean waters of Cayos Cochinos, an area comprised of two small islands and more than a dozen coral cays, are filled with banded butterfly fish, queen conch, sea cucumbers, and more. Recognized as a marine protected area, Cayos Grande, the largest of the volcanic islands, is the only island where tourists are allowed to snorkel. Open Water Diver Certified

visitors can sign up for coral reef cleaning and transplanting, a conservation initiative led by [Cayos Cochinos Foundation](#) where volunteers partake in two 40-50 minute dives a day to clean and measure coral being grown and monitor the site where healthy coral has been transplanted.

## **FREEDIVING**

For travelers searching to discover new limits, freediving can be a relaxing yet exhilarating way to explore the steep slopes of The Bay Islands. Unlike scuba diving and snorkeling, freediving is done without the help of breathing apparatus – with divers holding their breath as they descend to depths of 30-feet or more. It's a meditative adventure that offers a more intimate interaction with ocean life. With calm currents and deep abyss that lies just beyond the reef wall makes Honduras ideal for freediving. Home to the annual [Caribbean Cup Freediving Competition](#), Roatán has established itself as a worldwide destination for the sport. [Roatán Freediving School & Training Center](#) offers beginner to instructor level courses. The one-day introductory course includes one open water session and is aimed to help students develop the basic skills, knowledge, and safety procedures. [Freedive Utila](#), the first freediving school in Central America and the Caribbean, offers instruction for all levels of experience, with beginner courses taking place over two and a half days – enabling safe dives as deep as 20 meters.

## **SEMI-SUBMARINE**

For travelers of all ages interested in exploring the natural wonder of the Mesoamerican Reef without getting wet, [Hyde Tours Roatán](#) offers an incredible semi-submarine glass bottom boat excursion. Kids and adults venture six feet underwater in a glass bottom boat to discover vibrant corals and sea creatures that complete the colorful seascape during the 45-minute excursion along the reef. The tour departs from the island of Roatán's West Bay Beach, an underwater haven where coral reef is close enough to swim to from shore, offering excellent snorkeling and shore diving straight from the beach.

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## **HONDURAS EXPANDS ECOFOOTPRINT WITH NEW TRAVEL OFFERINGS ROOTED IN SUSTAINABILITY AND CONSERVATION**

*Experience the natural wonders and cultural treasures of Central America's most under-the-radar hotspot for eco-conscious travelers with Kimpton rebrand and more*

**New York, N.Y. – January 30, 2023:** For travelers looking to lessen their carbon footprint and make sustainability a focus in 2023, Honduras' exceptional biodiversity and longstanding commitment to responsible tourism attracts eco-conscious visitors from around the world. Participating in sustainable programs allows travelers to truly learn about Honduras and its culture while treading lightly, acting kindly, and supporting the communities they visit.

Located in the heart of Central America, Honduras, with its archeological wonders, sublime diving, rare birds, and jungle explorations, is expanding its ecofootprint with new travel offerings, as many properties and attractions opt to further develop sustainability through renovations and responsible tourism initiatives in 2023 and beyond.

When it opens in Summer 2023, **Kimpton Grand Roatan Resort & Spa** – situated on the southernmost tip of Roatán in the Caribbean – will be the island's first branded destination resort. A complete renovation and expansion, Kimpton Grand Roatan will offer 126 softly sophisticated guest rooms, inclusive of 31 suites, seven of which have balcony plunge pools overlooking the Caribbean Sea. The beachfront resort will feature four unique culinary concepts and boast Kimpton-signature amenities and perks such as evening social hour and pet-friendly policies. The interwoven campus of the resort will create a sense of place, pay homage to the local community and provide intimacy to the surrounding environment. Sustainability will be core to the resort's values and operations with a carefully designed infrastructure built on solar technologies, on-site water desalination and other adaptive reuse and eco-friendly touches.

The newly opened **[Kao Kamasa Spa](#)** (Pesh for "White City") offers the ultimate in destination wellness with private treatment rooms and bungalows for innovative and recharging services. The Pesh are believed to be the original inhabitants of the Bay Islands and still exist in small numbers on the mainland. The owners have a vision to educate about this indigenous people group by exposing guests to the culture through Pesh artifact replicas, art, treatment names and descriptions. The spa features an outdoor infinity pool with a see-through floor and outdoor treatment rooms so clients may appreciate the serenity and beauty of this unique location atop a raised-bed coral reef overlooking the beautiful Caribbean Sea.

Located just off the northern coast of Honduras and most easily accessible by boat from La Ceiba, **Cayos Cochinos** presents an archipelago of two forested islands and more than a dozen small

coral cays. Established as a key area of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System, the largest coral reef in the western hemisphere, the Cayos Cochinos archipelago – spanning 300,000 acres with a population of about 200 indigenous Garífuna residents – is home to the least disturbed ecosystem in this part of the Caribbean Sea. Recognized as a marine protected area, the nonprofit [Cayos Cochinos Foundation](#), which manages the reserve, is gently expanding its tourism offerings with the launch of an online reservation system in 2023 – inviting visitors to book overnight stays in the cabins previously reserved exclusively for scientists, and participate in voluntourism programs such as coral reef cleaning and transplanting, as well as sea turtle monitoring. All travel to Cayos Cochinos directly supports the foundation’s ongoing conservation initiatives, including the preservation of biodiversity, together, with the local Garífuna community.

Tucked into the Sierra Omoa Mountains just south of the community of Paraiso in Omoa, [Rawacala Ecopark](#) and its sister company, [Paraiso Rainforest & Beach Hotel](#), are offering extended purpose programs for guests. Rawacala was recently chosen by the USAID program “Cultivación de Empresas Turísticas de Impacto” (Cultivation of Impacting Touristic Companies) which will help them in the development of more conservation and touristic programs for Rawacala. Currently the hotel offers guided and unguided hiking experiences in Rawacala Ecopark, kayak tours of the bay, rappelling, ziplining over the canopy, and other activities for travelers seeking to mix a little adventure in with philanthropy.

The [Omega Tours Eco Jungle Lodge](#), ideally situated at the Cangrejal River Basin in La Ceiba, recently completed an expansion of its accommodations to include intimate, open-design guestrooms that take advantage of the natural airflow – delivering jungle breezes into the room alongside private porches equipped with hammocks looking out over the treetops. The new guestrooms, and the furniture within them, were all constructed using recycled materials and built onsite by local craftsman, of whom also developed the solar hot water system that treats and recycles used water with one of the most effective systems in Honduras.

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