

# **Nicaragua Trip Report**

By Linda and Chuck on s/v JACARANDA

March 21 - April 1, 2013 (During Semana Santa and Easter Sunday!!)

Exchange rate: 24.4 cordovas = \$1

**NOTES:** Nicañol - Nicaraguan Spanish

**ITINERARY:** Granada, Masaya, Leon

## **GETTING THERE:**

We left Jacaranda in Marina Puesta Del Sol - [www.marinapuestadelsol.com](http://www.marinapuestadelsol.com)

MPS is in an estuary northwest of Corinto on the coast (near the village of Aserradores)

(\$1.25/foot for first two days to cover check-in expenses, then \$.75/ft/day plus tax).

Navy (zarpe) and Immigration want exact fees EACH for check-in and check-out .

Total Actual Cost for 15 days: \$666.44 ( Dock: 3 days@.75/ft. + tax = 100.91; 12 days@.83/ft. + tax = 446.71; Copies: 4.60; Food: 115.13

## **Granada**

The hotel reception in the Marina got a quote of \$140 for a taxi to come from Chinandega (a real schlepp taking 1 hour) to take us to Granada.

Here's what we did instead:

Taxi from MarinaPS to Chinandega - taxi is the only option to get out of the Marina and the cost is \$25 one way (about 45 minutes, partly down a very rough road at the Marina entrance)

Chinandega to Managua - In Chinandega we had 2 choices (1) a crowded chicken bus or (2) an Expresso (microbus; non-airconditioned van) - a crowded 14 seat public van.

We took the latter because at least you get a seat, it is faster, and the price was right at \$3/person (76 cordovas). This trip took about 2 hours.

Once in Managua we took a short \$2.00 taxi from the Market bus stop to La UCA (pronounced "oo-ka") - a major transit center elsewhere in the city of Managua.

At UCA, we took another Expresso van (this one air-conditioned) to Granada (\$2/person). This was about 1 hour.

Texaco to Masaya by taxi - 15c/person

Masaya to Managua - 18 c/person

Managua to Leon - 18c/person

Leon to Managua - 51c/person

## **Hotel**

Los Patios Hotel

Calle Corrales 525, (505) 2552 0641

[www.lospatiosgranada.com](http://www.lospatiosgranada.com)

Staff: Armando, Anna, Ximara

\$115/night for a double room

\$150/night for the suite

Includes gourmet breakfast

Total Accommodations for 6 nights: \$711.36 (4 nites standard, 2 nites suite) with 20% discount (\$152 for staying 6 nights)

Food: \$34.74

Left a \$60 tip for staff

5 rooms, 14 meter swimming pool

Other hotel options:

Malinche

Margaritas's

Hotel SanFrancisco (seemed popular)

207 Calle Corrales

[hotelcasasanfrancisco.com](http://hotelcasasanfrancisco.com)

## **Restaurants**

El Garaje (The Garage)

Calle Corrales

lunch - gourmet sandwiches - 125-145C.

Wonderful food in the front part of this ex-pat's home

The Garden Cafe

El Camello

El Zaguan

Bistro Estrada - Calle El Arsenal

[www.bistroestrada.com](http://www.bistroestrada.com)

## **City Guide**

Que Pasa Granada

Free City Guide in English and Spanish

**To Do:** (also see Tours below)

City Walking Tour

La Calzada - Pedestrian street

## **TOURS**

No Rush Tours (Ramon)

We went on a hike to Vulcan Mombacho (south of Granada) in the morning

In the afternoon we took a boat ride on the Lake through Las Isletas - really enjoyable

Little known community tourism sites in rural areas around Granada:

[ucatierrayagua.org/communities](http://ucatierrayagua.org/communities) (spanish only)

Group excursions: [granadatravelclub.com](http://granadatravelclub.com) - non-profit; links people together who want to share costs

Poetry-loving Nicaraguans: [festivalpoesianicaragua.com](http://festivalpoesianicaragua.com)

Annual International Poetry Festival - Feb.

(with Crafts Fair and International Book Fair )

2013 - 135 renowned poets representing 70 countries.

## **Masaya** (March 28,29,30)

Hotel Casa Robleto

Frank Izschitz

Ave. San Jeronimo, 1 1/2 blocks South of San Jeronimo Park

\$50/night for a room with private bath -- with a good breakfast

Really wonderful to stay in this old colonial home still owned by the family (Frank, a real gentleman); beautiful courtyard.

Tel. (505) 2522-2617

<http://casarobleto.blogspot.com>

[casarobleto@gmail.com](mailto:casarobleto@gmail.com)

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### **To Do:**

Volcan Masaya National Park - First and largest national park.

Active shield volcano - lava appears at the surface of the it crater and it emits sulfurous gases. Sulfur tolerating parakeets that nest in the crater's walls.

Bat tunnels

1 of 18 distinct volcanic peaks in Nicaraguan portion of Central American Volcanic Belt - a 1500 kilometer (930 mile) chain of hundreds of volcanoes that runs parallel to the Pacific coastline of the Isthmus thru Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, to northern Panama.

## **Restaurants**

Not a lot of options

Cafe du Parc

## **Leon** - (April 1 - 2 nights)

Taxis are 20 c/person during the day and 30 c/person at night

### **Hotel**

Hotel Austria

De La Catedral 1 C. al Sur (1 block south of the Cathedral)

Navarette and Cia - proprietors

[www.hotelaustria.com.ni](http://www.hotelaustria.com.ni)

\$58/night without taxes

Total for 2 nights with taxes - \$135.99 or \$68/night

Alternative places to stay:

La Perla

Los Balcones -14 or 21 - \$47

Convento

Posada Fuente Castalia

## **Restaurants**

LeBolula - Calle Ruben Dario

Pan y Paz Bakery

Meson Real

El Sesteo

La Perla restaurant

### **Next Time:**

Pueblos Blancos

Lake Apoyo

Volcan Masaya

Omotepe

Archipelago Solintame

