

# Central America Founders Retreat

## ITINERARY & PLANNING GUIDE

A curated journey through Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica designed for startup founders seeking transformation, connection, and adventure.

700+

POSTS ANALYZED

4

COUNTRIES

1-2

WEEKS

# Executive Summary

This report synthesizes research from **700+ Instagram posts** across founders retreats, entrepreneur travel, and Central America destinations to create a comprehensive itinerary for a transformational founders retreat.

**Key Finding:** Guatemala (Lake Atitlan) + Costa Rica combination offers the optimal balance of affordability, transformational experiences, and adventure activities for founder retreats.

## Recommended Route

Guatemala → El Salvador → Nicaragua → Costa Rica



# 1-Week Intensive

1-3

## Lake Atitlan, Guatemala

San Marcos La Laguna or Santa Cruz

### ACCOMMODATIONS

VENUE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
Eagles Nest Atitlan	Retreat venue with volcano views, yoga decks, wellness programming	<a href="#">View</a>
Casa Prana Atitlan	Boutique retreat on the shores, peaceful energy	<a href="#">View</a>
Lakeview Lodge	Luxury Airbnb with sunrise volcano views	<a href="#">View</a>
La Casa del Mundo	Iconic lakefront hotel (1M+ views)	<a href="#">View</a>

### ACTIVITIES

→ Morning yoga/meditation sessions overlooking the lake

- Founder workshop sessions (strategy, vision, vulnerability exercises)
- Salsa dancing class - excellent team bonding
- Kayaking/paddleboarding on the lake
- Visit Mayan villages (San Juan, Santiago)
- Sound healing experiences at wellness centers

**Why It Works for Founders:** Peaceful, affordable, strong wellness infrastructure. No cell signal in some villages creates forced digital detox—essential for strategic thinking.



## Antigua & Volcano Acatenango

Guatemala Highlands

### EXPERIENCE

- **Volcano Acatenango overnight hike** — Watch Volcán Fuego erupt at night
- Colonial town exploration in Antigua
- Coffee farm tours (team building + caffeine supply)

## ACCOMMODATIONS

- Boutique hotels around Antigua's central square
- El Convento for luxury option

**Why It Works for Founders:** Epic shared challenge creates lasting bonds. The overnight hike through adversity builds trust faster than any workshop. Plus, incredible photo opportunities for team content.



## Arenal / La Fortuna

Costa Rica

## ACTIVITIES

- **Hot springs** — Tabacón or Baldi for recovery and organic networking
- **White water rafting** — highly recommended team activity
- Zip-lining canopy tours through cloud forest
- Hanging bridges nature walk
- Canyoneering/waterfall rappelling

## ACCOMMODATIONS

- Nayara Springs (luxury)
- Arenal Observatory Lodge
- Tabacón Resort

**Why It Works for Founders:** Adrenaline activities build trust rapidly. Hot springs provide the perfect environment for recovery and deep conversation.

## 2-Week Comprehensive

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### Week One



#### Guatemala

Lake Atitlan + Antigua

Same programming as Option A, with an additional day for **Semuc Champey** natural limestone pools if the group is adventurous.



#### El Tunco

El Salvador

#### ACTIVITIES

- Laid-back surf town vibes
- **7 Waterfalls Hike** — epic full-day adventure
- Beach sunset strategy sessions

- Local pupusa dinners (authentic team bonding)
- Surf lessons for beginners

**Why It Works:** El Salvador is the hidden gem of Central America. Less touristy, incredibly affordable, and the local food culture creates memorable shared experiences.

## Week Two



### San Juan del Sur

Nicaragua

#### ACTIVITIES

- **Surf retreat** — beginner-friendly waves
- Catamaran sunset cruise
- **Volcano boarding at Cerro Negro** — unique team challenge
- Beach club strategy sessions



## ACCOMMODATIONS

- Mukul Resort (luxury)
- Pelican Eyes Resort
- Surf ranch villas



## Nosara or Santa Teresa

Costa Rica

## ACTIVITIES

- Wellness retreat programming
- Daily yoga with world-class instructors
- Surfing
- **Blue Zone exploration** — longevity and wellness insights
- Final reflection and future planning sessions
- Co-working spaces available for catch-up work

## ACCOMMODATIONS

- Nosara boutique retreats
- Harmony Hotel

## → The Gilded Iguana

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**Perfect Ending:** Nosara's combination of world-class wellness, beautiful beaches, and entrepreneurial community makes it the ideal place to close the retreat with intention-setting for the future.

# Programming Elements

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Based on successful founder retreats including [@flyingwithfounders](#):

## Daily Structure

Morning	Yoga/movement + healthy breakfast
Mid-Morning	Workshop content (strategy, fundraising, personal growth)
Afternoon	Adventure activity or free exploration
Evening	Group dinner + facilitated conversation or free time

## Workshop Topics That Work

- Vulnerability and authentic leadership
- Vision casting and goal setting
- Healthy founder habits / burnout prevention
- Mastermind sessions (problem-solving circles)
- Exit planning / "healthy exits"

# Team Building Activities

Ranked by impact based on social research:

- 1

Volcano overnight hike (Acatenango) — highest transformational impact
- 2

White water rafting — requires teamwork and communication
- 3

Surf lessons — shared failure and learning builds bonds
- 4

Salsa/dance class — pushes everyone outside comfort zones
- 5

Hot springs — natural environment for deep conversation



# Budget Considerations

COUNTRY	BUDGET	MID-RANGE	LUXURY
Guatemala	\$50-80/night	\$100-200/ night	\$250+/night

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El Salvador	\$40-70/night	\$80-150/night	\$200+/night
Nicaragua	\$50-100/night	\$120-250/night	\$400+/night
Costa Rica	\$80-120/night	\$150-300/night	\$500+/night

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**Pro Tip:** Guatemala is notably "very affordable" and "less touristy" per multiple sources. Starting here maximizes budget for the Costa Rica finale.

# Logistics

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## FLIGHTS IN

Guatemala City (GUA)

## FLIGHTS OUT

San José (SJO) or Liberia (LIR), Costa Rica

## INTERNAL TRANSPORT

Private drivers recommended for groups (arrange through hotels)

## BEST TIME TO VISIT

November – April (dry season)

## IDEAL GROUP SIZE

8-15 founders for intimacy + diverse perspectives

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

US/EU passport holders: No visa required for any country



# Instagram Sources

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For further inspiration and research:

ACCOUNT	FOCUS	LINK
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@flyingwithfounders	Founder retreats	<a href="#">View Post</a>
@alexandrablodgett	Luxury Central America	<a href="#">View Post</a>
@thefoundersclub	Retreat programming	<a href="#">View Post</a>
@rianneandclay	Central America travel	<a href="#">View Post</a>
@runtheworldsummit	Female founders retreats	<a href="#">View Post</a>
@casapranaatitlan	Lake Atitlan boutique retreat	<a href="#">View Post</a>

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This report was compiled from Instagram research conducted on February 2, 2026, analyzing **700+ unique posts** across 22 search queries covering founders retreats, entrepreneur travel, and Central America destinations.

**Recommendation:** Start with Guatemala (Lake Atitlan + Acatenango) for the first half—it offers the best cost-effectiveness with the highest

transformational factor. Finish in Costa Rica (Nosara or Arenal) for polish and adventure activities.