

# Press release

Wednesday May 25, 2011

El Salvador and Nicaragua are countries that are quite different from each other in more than one way. El Salvador is characterized by its green and mountainous landscape, while wide valleys with volcanoes rising out of nowhere prevail in Nicaragua. For years, the only viable route between these two countries has been by land, crossing Honduras and, therefore, four borders. This journey takes 12 hours, approximately, including migration procedures.

For visitors who come to Central America in a Multi-destination circuit, Ruta del Golfo is, by far, the best choice for a connection between El Salvador and Nicaragua; specifically to connect two of the main attractions of these countries: the cities of Suchitoto and León.

## **Cruce del Golfo**

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During the journey, the passengers will enjoy the wonderful views the gulf offers. The impressive volcanoes of Conchagua (El Salvador) and Cosigüina (Nicaragua) will greet you at the beginning and at the end of the journey. The Islands of the archipelago of the Gulf of Fonseca will also keep us company throughout the journey and we will be able to observe the local fishermen on their daily work routines.

Ruta del Golfo offers the opportunity to make a stop in Meanguera del Golfo, the largest of the populated islands in El Salvador, where visitors can have a drink or a delicious lunch prepared with local ingredients, or

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Simply enjoy the warm waters that the paradisiacal beaches offer in this island. For nature lovers, this trip will be the perfect chance to see a large number of birds from the boat. In addition, with a little luck, during the tour you can enjoy the company of dolphins or sea turtles.

We have spared no efforts or resources to provide a high quality product, following the strictest standards of security for our passengers. The service is provided in a safe and modern boat with capacity for 20 passengers. The boat is equipped with ergonomic chairs with cup holders, carpeted flat floor and luggage compartment. Moreover, to ensure the safety of our passengers, the boat has GPS, navigation lights, 2 brand new 140 BHP outboard engines, radio communication, compass, and life jackets.

We also have the services of an expert captain and his assistant, people with years of experience driving boats and transporting tourists. They possess invaluable knowledge about the area, tides, weather and wildlife of the Gulf of Fonseca. Their skill and knowledge are invaluable in providing a service like Cruce del Golfo, to give our passengers an authentic unforgettable experience.

Ruta del Golfo was established in the spring of 2011, when the border between Nicaragua and Honduras was closed for some days. Nobody was allowed to cross the usual border post; hundreds of tourists got stuck. Vapues Tours ([www.vapues.com](http://www.vapues.com)), one of Nicaragua's leading tour operators, had to improvise and decided to transfer the clients by local fisher boats through the Gulf of Fonseca, a beautiful but hardly visited place bordering Nicaragua in the northwest. The response of the clients was overwhelmingly positive.

This was the opportunity for us and our Salvadorian partner Mayan Escapes ([www.mayanescapes.com](http://www.mayanescapes.com)) to develop a scenic and fast route to cross the borders between Nicaragua and El Salvador: Ruta del Golfo was born.

Since our first commercial sailing, Ruta del Golfo has been operating for around 18 months and has been received with excitement among our business partners and the public. To date, the service has been given to groups of Dutch, Spanish, German, Canadian, American and Australian tourists and travel agents.

Vapues Tours and Mayan Escapes are still developing Ruta del Golfo to improve our services, and to reduce the environmental impact on the region.

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The border crossing by boat is not only the fastest, but also the most scenic route between El Salvador and Nicaragua, as it still has the rustic natural enchantment of the Gulf of Fonseca, one of the most beautiful and unexplored regions of Central America.

Suchitoto (El Salvador) means "Place of birds and flowers" in Nahuatl, the language of the Pipil, founders and first inhabitants of this village. With the charm of its beautiful balconies, adobe houses and romantic cobblestone streets, Suchitoto is one of the most interesting historic cities of El Salvador. The city offers many entertainment options, with an interesting mixture of the past and the culture of a vibrant city.

León (Nicaragua) is a cultural and historical attraction that is well worth a visit. The surroundings offer plenty of opportunities for interesting tours, which makes León a great destination for a one or two-night stay. The fact that León is not as known and famous as Granada has its advantages: it is, to some extent, more authentic, since it gives visitors the chance to mingle with the locals and experience their daily lives first hand.