

The Gringo's Guide to Tourist Destinations on Guatemala's Caribbean Coast

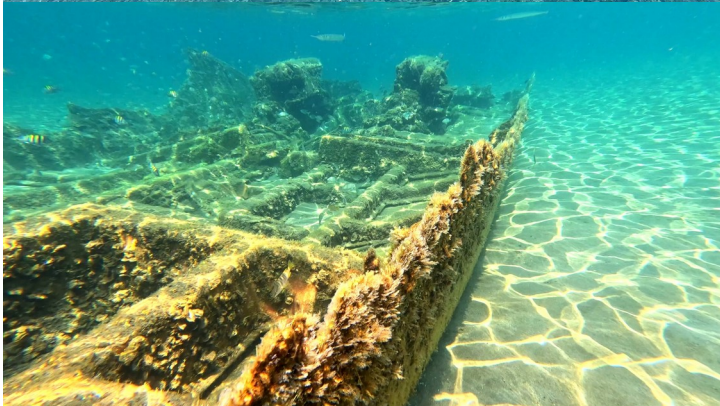
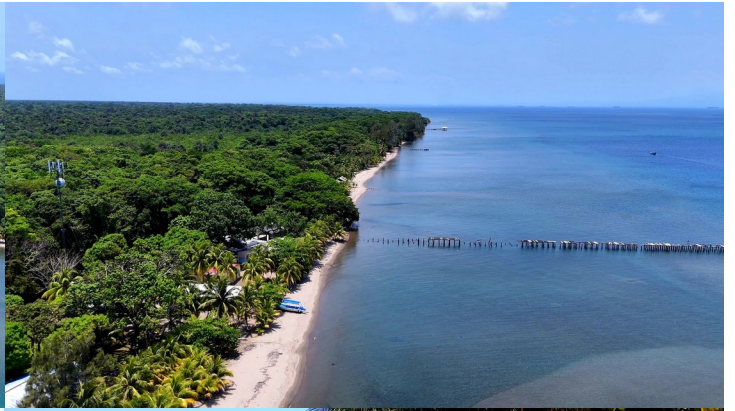
When people think of Guatemala, they often picture Antigua's rich colonial history, Lake Atitlán's stunning scenery, or Tikal's ancient ruins. Fewer travelers make it to the country's Caribbean coast. Here are eight places you should consider on your next trip.

1. Punta de Manabique

Punta de Manabique is a protected area that separates the Amatique Bay from the Gulf of Honduras. The water on the inside of the peninsula is clear and calm. On the outside of the peninsula, the water is still clear but there are waves and shallow sand bars.

There is a restaurant that prepares generous portions of fresh, local seafood. There is also a sunken yacht that is an excellent place for snorkeling. Punta de Manabique is accessible by boat. The best time of year to go is between December and May.





2. Senderos de Río Escobas

Río Escobas is a nature reserve with crystal clear water, natural pools, waterfalls, and manicured nature trails. The river is born out of the differential in temperature between sea level and the top of a 3,000 foot high mountain range. When hot air meets the cold mountaintops, it produces rain, even when it is a sunny day near sea level. This insures a steady supply of refreshingly cool, clean water feeding the river. The river is also used for the municipal water supply of Puerto Barrios. Río Escobas is accessible by road and the best time of year to go is between September and December.



3. Playa Pública de Punta de Palma

Punta de Palma's public beach offers soft white sand, calm water, and a family-friendly atmosphere. There are various restaurants on the beach. Whether you want to order lunch or relax with an ice cold drink, they have you covered. It is Puerto Barrios main public beach and can get quite festive on weekends and holidays. During Easter Week, there is live music. During Christmas, families camp in tents. At night, people sit around campfires and roast marshmallows as they watch small waves crash into the sand. Groups often come on day trips, and several times a year, there is a competition with dozens of miniature 1-person sailboats. The beach has road access and regular boat service to Puerto Barrios and Livingston.



4. Playa Blanca

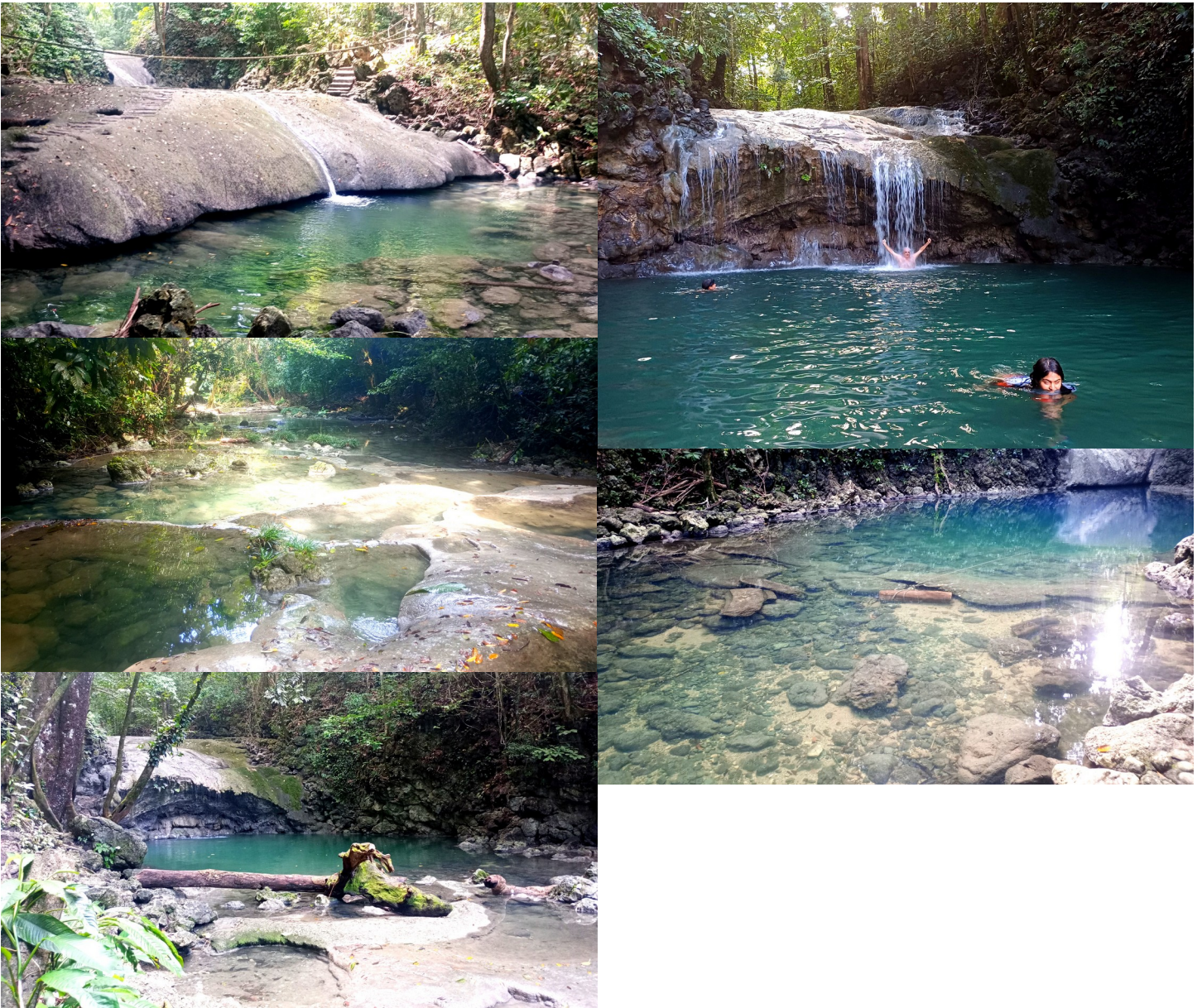
Playa Blanca is a beautiful white sand beach, located near the border with Belize. The water is calm and the beach is well maintained, with picnic tables, clean bathrooms, hammocks, and a restaurant. Playa Blanca is one of Guatemala's most popular beaches. It is accessible by boat.



5. Siete Altares

Siete Altares is a river destination that is located about 3 miles (5 kilometers) northwest of Livingston. There are a series of 7 waterfalls and crystal clear natural pools (altars) before the river meets the sea.

The people who work there speak Garífuna as their first language. They have a traditional Garífuna altar at the entrance, sell traditional food on the weekends, and are proud to answer questions about their culture. The area is accessible by boat or you can walk about 30 minutes along the beach from the far side of Livingston. The best time of year to go is between September and December.



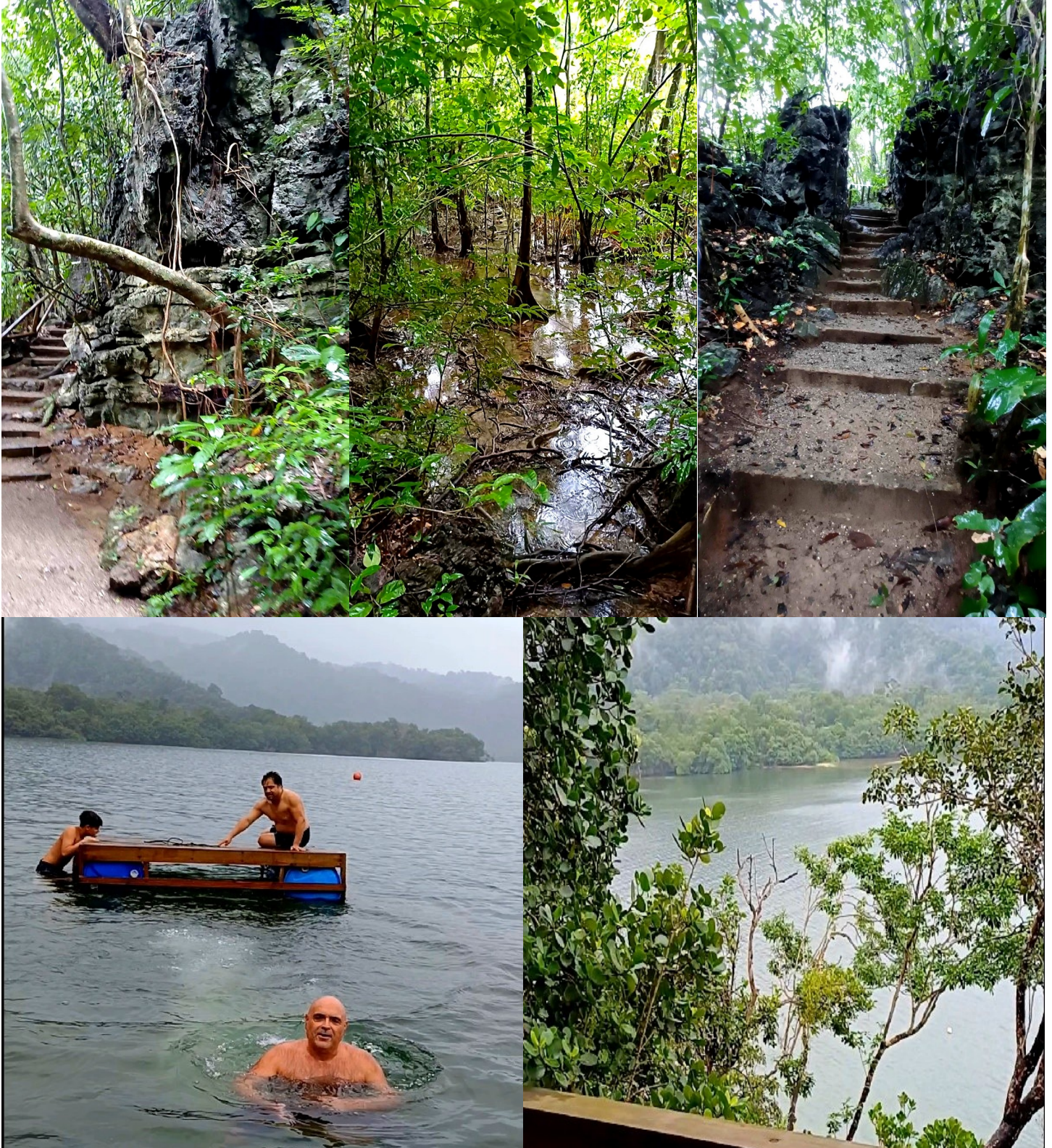
6. Punta de Cocolí

Half way between Siete Altares and Playa Blanca lies the little-known beach of Punta de Cocolí. A narrow strip of golden sand separates forested mountains from deep, clear water. The area is divided into several smaller beaches by large rock outcroppings that also serve to block waves, creating the perfect environment for swimming and snorkeling.



7. Ensenada Verde

Ensenada Verde is located where the mountains and rain forest meets the Santo Tomas Bay. There are manicured nature trails, majestic rock outcroppings, and a lookout tower. There are also kayak rentals and a large floating dock for swimming and diving.



8. Cañón del Río Dulce y Agua Caliente

The Río Dulce is the river that flows from the town of Río Dulce to the town of Livingston. Midway, it widens into an area known as El Golfete. Upstream of El Golfete, the banks are lined with villages, marinas, and houses tucked among the trees. The shores feel open and settled, with people living right on the water and boats passing constantly. It's a lively contrast to the wilder, jungle-covered canyon downstream. Downstream of El Golfete, the view is more dramatic as the river cuts through jungles and steep mountains. Agua caliente is located on the side of one of those mountains. The area offers a restaurant overlooking the river, nature trails, caves, and hot springs.



If you haven't already checked them out, I have two more free guides:

- The Gringo's Guide to Living on Guatemala's Caribbean Coast
- The Gringo's Guide to Driving and Vehicle Ownership in Guatemala

You can download the guides at:

<https://www.caribbeanadventuretours.gt.com/download-guides>

My main focus here is renting comfortable, air-conditioned homes near Guatemala's Caribbean coast and helping newcomers get to know the area. I like to rent month-to-month because sometimes people's plans change, and I don't want anyone to feel locked in, but I also try to avoid the constant turnover of having different people each night. In addition to the rentals, I take people on weekend boat tours and host beach barbecues, where gringos and locals can meet and get to know each other.

If you're considering spending time here, there are two ways that I can help you get oriented:

1. We can schedule a free 30-minute phone call where I can answer specific questions.
2. I offer affordable short orientation visits where you can stay for a few days and I'll personally show you around Punta de Palma and Puerto Barrios.

You can contact me via email or WhatsApp:

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