

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES



XPLORA TOURS

RECORRIDOS EN EL CASCO URBANO, SENDERISMO Y AVENTURA

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ABSTRACT

Tourism in El Salvador has grown as a dynamic sector, offering diverse natural, cultural, and historical attractions that appeal to both domestic and international travelers. Xplora Tours represents a modern approach to tourism by providing authentic, educational, and sustainable experiences that connect visitors with the country's heritage. The company emphasizes community participation, cultural immersion, and environmental responsibility, ensuring high-quality and accessible tours for families, groups, and individuals.

Through professional guidance, comfortable transportation, and curated cultural activities, Xplora Tours promotes sustainable human development, supporting local economic growth, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation. By combining entrepreneurship with social responsibility and innovation, the company demonstrates how tourism can become a tool for meaningful impact, enhancing visitor experiences while contributing to the well-being and pride of Salvadoran communities.

Keywords: tourism, Xplora Tours, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, community involvement, cultural experience, environmental responsibility, local communities, entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is more than travel; it is an opportunity to experience culture, history, and nature while fostering economic and social growth. In El Salvador, tourism has evolved alongside historical and social changes, offering diverse attractions from stunning beaches and volcanic landscapes to rich cultural traditions and archaeological sites. These resources make the country a unique destination for travelers seeking both adventure and cultural immersion.

Xplora Tours offers an innovative approach to tourism by providing experiences that are authentic, educational, and sustainable. Designed to connect visitors with the country's natural and cultural heritage, our tours emphasize community involvement, cultural understanding, and environmental responsibility. Serving families, groups, and both domestic and international travelers, Xplora Tours ensures that every journey is accessible, high-quality, and memorable, with operations conveniently located in central areas such as Metrocentro San Salvador.

Beyond exceptional tours, Xplora Tours integrates sustainable human development principles into every experience, promoting local economic growth, environmental protection, education, and overall well-being. By combining professional guidance, immersive cultural activities, and responsible travel practices, Xplora Tours not only enriches visitors' experiences but also contributes to the social, cultural, and economic advancement of local communities. This approach demonstrates how ethical entrepreneurship in tourism can transform opportunities into meaningful experiences, positioning Xplora Tours as a catalyst for sustainable development and cultural pride in El Salvador.

CHAPTER I:
TOURIST SERVICE PROFILE

OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

To promote comprehensive tourism experiences within El Salvador, such as the enjoyment, appreciation, and preservation of the country's natural, cultural, and historical resources, through quality services that encourage sustainable tourism, safety, and customer satisfaction.

Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the main natural, cultural, and historical resources that can be integrated into the tourism experiences offered.
2. To implement service strategies that guarantee safe, high-quality, and satisfying tour experiences.
3. To encourage awareness and participation in sustainable tourism to help conserve heritage and boost community development.

JUSTIFICATION

Local tourism in El Salvador presents great potential due to its natural, cultural, and historical richness, which in many cases remains unknown or underexploited both by the country's inhabitants and by foreign tourists. The creation of the promotion of local destinations and the creation of authentic tourism experiences are still insufficient, limiting the economic dynamism of rural and urban communities with tourism attractions.

The creation of a tour operator focused on local tourism addresses the need to diversify the tourism offer and foster a sense of belonging and national pride. This project will bring Salvadorans and international visitors closer to the country's hidden treasures, promoting sustainability and respect for local cultures and the environment. Furthermore, the implementation of this project will contribute to economic development through the generation of direct and indirect jobs in the communities where it will operate, as well as the strengthening of small businesses and local artisans who will be integrated into the tourism activities.

Finally, this project is viable, as El Salvador has a growing network of tourism infrastructure and an increasing interest in community-based and sustainable tourism. With proper planning, strategic partnerships, and effective promotion, the tour operator can position itself as a reference in the national and international tourism market.

Description of the Service

Target audience

At Xplora Tours, we understand that each traveler has unique interests and needs. That's why we've designed our tours to appeal to a variety of audiences who seek meaningful and memorable experiences in El Salvador.

- Groups of friends looking for weekend getaways and fun experiences.
- Families seeking safe, accessible, and enriching trips.
- Domestic and international tourists eager to explore new destinations and discover Salvadoran culture.

Our goal is to offer something special for everyone, from casual explorers to cultural enthusiasts.

Why is the name Xplora tours'?

Xplora Tours symbolize excitement and discovery, which are essential in today's travel industry.

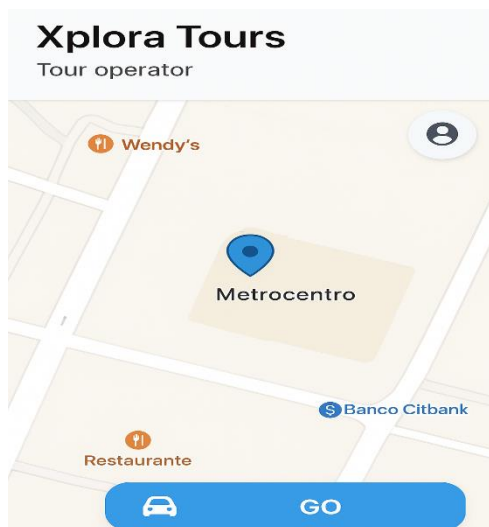
The word "Xplora" conveys a spirit of curiosity and the desire to explore perfectly matching the goal of revealing El Salvador's hidden attractions. This name captures the project's mission: to promote exploration, foster cultural connections, and offer true, memorable experiences.

Location

The service will be designed to be accessible to Salvadorans and foreigners, with fair prices and convenient locations, such as Metrocentro in San Salvador.

Figure 1

Location



Note: Xplora Tours' Location. Created by Amaya in waze.

What does Xplora tours' tourism service consist of?

At Xplora Tours, we offer a full tourism service that includes planning, organizing, and running cultural, nature, and adventure experiences all around El Salvador.

We want travelers to really discover the country, its history, people, traditions, and beautiful places through fun and meaningful activities.

- Professional Guides and Trained Staff: Certified, multilingual guides who ensure educational, safe, and engaging experiences.
- Comfortable Tourist Transportation: Air-conditioned, well-maintained vehicles and skilled drivers ensure a smooth ride.
- Variety of Activities Depending on the Destination: Tailored experiences: from archaeological tours to beachside adventures.
- Interaction with Local Communities: Direct engagement with local people for authentic cultural exchange.
- Responsible Tourism Practices: Commitment to sustainability, ethical tourism, and community benefit.

Each of our tours is designed to offer the perfect balance of structure, exploration, and cultural depth.

Activities Offered as a Tour Operator

At Xplora Tours, we focus on cultural tourism. This means we create trips that help people learn about and enjoy the traditions, history, and art of El Salvador.

- Archaeological Site Tours: Visit sites like Joya de Cerén and Tazumal with expert guides.
- Historic City Tours: Explore colonial architecture and local life in cities like Suchitoto.
- Local Festivals and Cultural Events: Participate in Salvadoran traditions, music, and food.
- Museum and Cultural Center Visits: Discover curated exhibits on art, history, and indigenous culture.
- Guided Cultural Walks: Community-led tours through neighborhoods, towns, and rural areas.
- Folklore Performances: Enjoy live traditional music, dance, and storytelling.

Plus, we include practical amenities that enhance travel experience:

- Comfortable Tourist Transport with A/C
- Group Coordinator
- Photo Coverage
- Safety Equipment
- Free Time at the Place
- Excellent Experience Guaranteed

These services ensure that each journey is both enjoyable and unforgettable.

Main Attributes of our Cultural Tourism Experiences

At Xplora Tours, we focus on offering quality cultural tourism that is authentic, sustainable, and centered with the community.

Our approach goes beyond the typical tourist experience. We create real connections between travelers and Salvadoran communities, combining educational content, cultural immersion, and environmentally responsible practices.

- **Authenticity:** Avoid commercial tourism and embrace genuine culture and traditions.
- **Educational Value:** Provide insights into Salvadoran history, society, and environment.
- **Community Focus:** Engage locals as guides, hosts, and artisans; support their economies.
- **Sustainability:** Operate responsibly to protect cultural heritage and the environment.
- **Diversity:** Offer experiences across rural, urban, coastal, and indigenous communities.
- **Immersion and Participation:** Encourage hands-on involvement in cooking, crafting, and cultural practices.

We believe tourism should benefit everyone like travelers, hosts, and the environment.

Typology of The Tourist Service

Xplora Tours operates as a national, inbound, retail-based, ecotourism-focused tour operator that caters to a diverse audience. Its national tourism approach ensures that all tours take place within El Salvador, showcasing the country's unique attractions such as the volcanoes of Izalco and Santa Ana, the beaches, La Libertad, Costa del Sol and El Tunco, the colonial town of Suchitoto, and the archaeological site of Joya de Cerén. This strategy strengthens domestic tourism and encourages Salvadorans to explore and appreciate their own cultural and natural heritage.

As an inbound tourism operator, Xplora Tours serves both local and international visitors. International travelers can enjoy immersive experiences such as coffee plantation tours in Apaneca, traditional gastronomy workshops, and guided wildlife hikes in national parks. These experiences are designed to provide a deeper understanding of Salvadoran culture, history, and natural environments.

The retail-based model allows Xplora Tours to sell its services directly to customers through online platforms, social media, and offices, enabling personalized attention, flexible itineraries, and customized experiences tailored to the interests of each group.

Being ecotourism-focused, the company prioritizes nature-based activities such as volcano trekking, birdwatching in Montecristo National Park, mangrove tours in Barra de Santiago, and surfing trips along the Pacific coast. Sustainable practices are incorporated into every tour, including waste reduction, environmental education, and partnerships with local communities to protect natural resources.

Xplora Tours also targets a diverse audience, offering family-friendly excursions, adventure activities for young travelers, educational tours for students, and leisure trips for older adults. Additionally, tours include opportunities for cultural immersion, such as visits to traditional markets, artisan workshops, and local festivals, as well as community engagement projects that support local economies. Adventure and wellness activities, including surfing, kayaking, hiking, and yoga retreats, provide holistic experiences combining excitement, relaxation, and personal growth.

In summary, Xplora Tours in El Salvador integrates a comprehensive approach to tourism, combining safety, quality, sustainability, and inclusivity, while offering a wide range of cultural, ecological, and adventure experiences that reflect the richness and diversity of the country.

Principles for the Sustainable Human Development of Xplora Tours

1. Principle of emotional and psychological wellbeing.

Xplora Tours will focus on creating experiences that will allow people to disconnect from daily stress and reconnect with nature, culture, and themselves. This will respond to the integral wellbeing of the human being, one of the pillars of sustainable human development.

2. Principle of access and equity.

The service will be designed to be accessible to Salvadorans and foreigners, with fair prices and convenient locations, such as Metrocentro in San Salvador. This will reflect a commitment to social inclusion and the democratization of tourism, ensuring that more people will be able to enjoy and get to know their country.

3. Principle of local economic development.

The promotion of destinations within the country will suggest a boost to domestic tourism. Xplora Tours will establish alliances with local tour guides and small businesses such as restaurants, transport providers, and accommodations. These actions will indirectly benefit rural communities and will contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic development.

4. Principle of Terrestrial Ecosystems.

Xplora Tours will promote respect and care for the environment by encouraging responsible interaction with natural spaces. The tours will foster awareness of the importance of protecting flora and fauna, as well as the conservation and preservation of biodiversity. This principle will contribute to sustainable tourism practices that protect ecosystems and ensure their continuity for future generations.

5. Principle of Quality Education

By offering experiences that will teach about history, traditions, and culture, Xplora Tours will fulfill an educational role that will promote personal growth and social and cultural awareness of the traveler—key factors of sustainable human development.

6. No poverty and Responsible Consumption and Production

Xplora Tours will contribute to sustainable development by promoting job creation and economic opportunities through local tourism, helping to reduce poverty in rural communities. At the same time, it will adopt responsible consumption and production practices by using resources efficiently and promoting local products and services. In this

way, the company will support conscious tourism that enhances both social well-being and environmental care.

CHAPTER II:
CONDITIONING ELEMENTS FOR THE DESIGN OF THE TOURIST PRODUCT
OR SERVICE

The Origins of Tourism

Tourism, or in this case, the origins of tourism as such, began in the 19th century as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, with travel primarily for leisure, relaxation, culture, health, business, or family relationships.

Tourism has become one of the main activities of our economy. And, in addition to being a very important factor in it, providing employment for millions of people (directly or indirectly) and generating significant economic figures each year, it has become part of most households as a form of leisure. Something that has always been linked to our history.

The origin

In the early 1930s, one of the first theorists of the German School of Tourism Studies, Arthur Bormann, defined tourism as a set of trips taken for pleasure or for commercial and other similar reasons, during which the absence from the usual place of residence is temporary. Trips taken to travel to the workplace are not considered tourism. According to the UNWTO, a visitor (internal, inbound, or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor) if their trip includes an overnight stay, or as a day visitor (or excursionist) if not. In other words, an excursionist is a person who visits a destination but does not stay overnight.

The pioneering theorists in tourism, Walter Hunziker and Kurt Krapf, stated in 1942 that “Tourism is the set of relationships and phenomena produced by the movement and stay of people away from their homes, insofar as such movements and stays are not motivated by a lucrative activity.” Both Hunziker and Krapf came from the St. Gallen School (Switzerland), which proposed the idea of studying tourism as a mechanism focused on the socio-economic reproduction of a society. Tourism consumption reflects the cultural values of a society.

Other historical references to the beginnings of tourism can be found during the heyday of ancient Rome. People continued to enjoy trips for religious and sporting reasons, but also for

other reasons, such as health tourism in the thermal baths or the vacations enjoyed by emperors.

During this period, new communication routes began to open, which the patricians and nobles used to go to the beach or visit places throughout the empire. Could these be the beginnings of beach vacations?

And, in the Middle Ages, pilgrimages to sacred places began. Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago de Compostela became very important in the medieval era. Pilgrims hired a guide to take them along the best route, as well as soldiers to protect them during their journey. These are the first records we have of organized trips in the full sense of the word.

Contemporary Age

In 1841, Thomas Cook organized the first planned trip in history. Although it was a financial failure, it is considered a resounding success in terms of setting a precedent for package tours, as he realized the enormous economic potential of this activity, thus creating the world's first travel agency, Thomas Cook and Son, in 1851.

World War II brought tourism to a complete standstill worldwide, with effects lasting until 1949. Between 1950 and 1973, people began to talk about a tourism boom. International tourism grew at a faster rate than it had ever been before in history. This development was a consequence of the new international order, social stability, and the development of leisure culture in the Western world. During this period, legislation began to be introduced for the sector.

The economic recovery, especially in Germany and Japan, was astonishing, raising income levels in these countries and giving rise to a wealthy middle class that began to take an interest in travel. The recovery raised the standard of living of the most important sectors of the population in Western countries. The so-called welfare society emerged, in which, once

basic needs were met, there was a focus on education and an interest in travel and learning about other cultures.

On the other hand, new labor legislation adopting paid vacations, the English 5-day work week, the reduction of the 40-hour work week, and the expansion of social coverage (retirement, unemployment, etc.) greatly enhanced the development of leisure and tourism.

A Brief History of Tourism in Spain

The evolution of tourism in Spain began later than in the rest of Europe, specifically at the end of the 19th century. As in the rest of the continent, the offering focused on spas and was aimed at a clientele with high purchasing power, consisting almost entirely of the aristocracy and the emerging upper middle class in the cities. Some of these spas, such as Panticosa and Mondariz, became mini cities with churches, shops, post offices, and residential areas for domestic servants, who accompanied wealthy families during their stay.

However, in the first quarter of the 20th century, an unusual interest in beaches arose among the population. The health benefits of seawater, once again a therapeutic source, turned beaches into much cheaper open-air spas. Thus, places such as El Sardinero in Santander and La Concha in San Sebastián became the origin of what we now call “summer vacationing.” There, the influx of bathers was considerable during the summer period, perhaps due to the number of services offered by both cities and the attendance of members of the royal families and high nobility. The customs of these early bathers seem extravagant to us today: they have dived only once a day and immersed themselves completely for only a few seconds, sometimes with the help of a lifeguard (Mediterrani, 2022).

History of El Salvador

The first initiative to promote tourism in El Salvador took place in 1924, under the government of President Alfonso Quiñónez Molina, with the creation of the Board of Tourism and Agricultural and Industrial Propaganda, which aimed to promote domestic and

foreign tourism. In 1946, the National Department of Tourism was created as a section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The 1960s are considered the modern era of tourism development in El Salvador; tourism was systematically considered, and several official agencies were created to promote it. The environment in which tourism took off in this decade was one of relative economic prosperity for the country.

The factors that influenced El Salvador to consider tourism from the 1960s onwards were the modernization of transport, the expansion of the road network, and an increase in flights to El Salvador with the construction of Ilopango International Airport. At the same time, mass tourism began to emerge, which also reached Central America to a lesser extent. Thus, in 1961, the Salvadoran Institute of Tourism (ISTU) was created as a government agency to manage tourism. Its main responsibilities were as follows: Developing projects to promote and develop the tourism industry. Regulating tourism companies. Managing tourism assets. Submitting regular reports on the sector's performance. From 1968 onwards, there is more evidence about tourism in El Salvador, as the ISTU began to publish statistical bulletins indicating the number of tourists entering the country. It could be said that demand was concentrated in three main markets: the region, the United States, and Mexico. However, tourism declined in 1969 due to the war between El Salvador and Honduras, which affected regional stability. The development of tourism in El Salvador in the 1970s was driven by the construction of hotels such as Camino Real, Ritz, Alameda, and Terraza in San Salvador, the Hotel de Montaña in El Cerro Verde, and hotels in Estero de Jaltepeque (Pacific Paradise and Izalco Cabaña Club) in the interior of the country.

Similarly, construction began on the Tesoro Beach Hotel (Estero de Jaltepeque), which is well known and visited today. Currently, all hotels are open for business except for the Ritz Hotel. In 1975, the number of tourists increased by more than 200,000 to a total of 300,000. That year, this increase coincided with the Miss Universe pageant being held in El Salvador. The boom remained stable until the end of the 1970s. However, the start of the war

marked the decline of what seemed to be a new profitable industry for El Salvador, causing the number of tourists to fall below 100,000. The figures indicate that by the end of the 1970s, the country had regressed 15 years. During the period from 1979 to 1990, the flow of visitors to the country remained constant; most of them were foreign journalists or non-governmental institutions working with Salvadoran society.

Tourism During the Armed Conflict (1980-1992)

Violence wiped El Salvador off the international tourist map. In the US market, for example, in addition to warnings not to visit the country, visa applications were subject to strict investigations to prevent left-wing sympathizers from entering.

As a result, the possibilities for tourism development were nil, and the construction of tourism infrastructure came to a standstill. The only foreign visitors were linked to the armed conflict: military advisers, people with leftist leanings, officials from international organizations, journalists, or those curious about the war situation. The hotel industry, in particular, was affected in the early years of the armed conflict, but its situation later improved, showing acceptable occupancy levels due to the shortage of rooms in the capital to accommodate the individuals. A special case was that of the Hotel Camino Real, which was considered the safest hotel and benefited greatly from being chosen by the international press as its base of operations.

In 1991, with the presence of the United Nations in the country, the number of visitors increased from around 125,000 to nearly 200,000. In 1992, the imminent signing of the Peace Accords prompted a slow upturn in the sector, until a year later it reached a record figure of more than 300,000 visitors, the highest number of tourists the country had received in 25 years. After a slight decline in the following two years, tourism has since increased, reaching almost 800,000 tourists in 2000. In 2001, there were 734,627 visitors (almost 60,000 fewer than in 2000), but it should be noted that the earthquakes in January and February contributed to a significant decline in the number of travelers to El Salvador.

Tourism in El Salvador experienced a year of recovery in 2002, with a 29.4% increase in the number of visitors and a 45.6% increase in the amount of foreign exchange generated for the country. According to data from the Salvadoran Tourism Corporation (CORSATUR), 950,597 people entered the country as tourists in 2002, which is 216,000 more than in the previous year. Forty percent of the visitors received by the country in 2002 for tourism were Guatemalans, followed by US citizens, who accounted for 18%. In net figures, 377,329 Guatemalans and 167,765 Americans entered the country. Honduras accounted for 137,156 visitors (14% of the total), while Nicaragua accounted for 119,323 (equivalent to 13%).

The four countries mentioned accounted for 85% of tourists in 2002. Guatemala was not only the country that attracted the most tourists to our nation, but also the one that increased its percentage share of the tourism market the most, rising from 377,329 people the previous year to 285,749 in 2001. This represents a 32% increase in the flow of Guatemalans to El Salvador, as there were 103,786 additional “chapines” in 2002. Over the last five years, CORSATUR has been promoting rural and cultural tourism, in which visitors can visit archaeological sites, colonial towns, and, in rural areas, witness the processing and cultivation of agricultural products. Another line of promotion is adventure and ecological tourism. To this end, the country would exploit its national parks and volcanoes.

Current Situation of Tourism in El Salvador

Without a doubt, in just a few years El Salvador has begun to regain its privileged position as a regional tourist destination. Its 20,742 square kilometers are home to a wonderful corner of the world that offers visitors the chance to discover a wide variety of charming tourist attractions and sites.

CORSATUR (Salvadoran Tourism Corporation) is the private entity responsible for promoting tourism in El Salvador both nationally and internationally. Its main objective is to position tourism as one of the main sources of employment in the country, with the aim of improving living conditions in a sustainable manner. In this regard, in coordination with the

private sector and other government institutions, it works to rescue and conserve the country's natural and cultural heritage, with a view to exploiting it as a tourist attraction.

Currently, CORSATUR has grouped El Salvador's tourist sites into so-called Tourist Routes, which cross the entire country. Each of these routes (described below) offers a different type of tourism for all tastes, from archaeology to visits to traditional tropical beaches.

There are eight routes, each one encompassing different place with their own customs and traditions, allowing visitors to discover picturesque colonial towns and natural sites offering a wide range of activities, whether on beaches, lakes, or visiting impressive volcanoes or rivers.

El Salvador also has Mayan archaeological sites and a variety of handicrafts. All these wonderful places that the country offers visitors are complemented by the hospitality of the people, who are known for their constant cheerfulness and kindness, providing tourists with a pleasant and enjoyable experience. This is how a country shares its natural, cultural, and tourist heritage with the whole world.

Similarly, there are more than 300 kilometers of beaches to choose from. On the Pacific coast of El Salvador, there are different beaches for tourists to enjoy. To the west, the coves are very private and feature black volcanic sand and tropical waters. To the east, the beaches are quite extensive and have soft black sand where you can enjoy activities such as surfing, sport fishing, sailing, and sea turtle watching. Seafood dishes are an essential part of the country's cuisine, as are pupusas, a popular Salvadoran specialty. For those who enjoy being in touch with nature, there are many activities to do in El Salvador, where habitats vary from mangrove swamps and dry tropical forests to cloud forests laden with orchids. 513 species of birds have been identified, some of which are only found in the El Salvador region.

If you are looking for adventure, the country offers some excellent options, such as rappelling and rock climbing, hiking through areas where guerrillas once roamed, diving, and surfing. For those who enjoy shopping, there are many handicrafts from different towns that

are distinguished by the creativity of their artisans, such as La Palma, Ilobasco, Nahuizalco, San Sebastián, among others. Wherever tourists go in El Salvador, they will be able to see beautiful volcanoes surrounded by coffee plantations, sugar farms, and beautiful blue lakes. One of the oldest volcanoes is Cerro Verde, from where visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of the Salvadoran countryside and the Izalco and Santa Ana volcanoes, which are very close to Cerro Verde. In terms of water resources, the Torola, La Paz, and Lempa rivers offer rapids for kayaking, canoeing, or rafting. Despite being a small country, El Salvador offers tourists endless activities to enjoy and escape from stress. (Biblioteca UJMD, s. f.)

Natural Resources in the El Salvador Destination Area

Sun and Beach Route

El Salvador has a truly enviable coastal tourist area, which is crowded with both domestic and foreign tourists. Some of these beaches offer sports such as surfing and diving, among others. Among these are: Puerto de la Libertad for surfing at beaches such as Punta Roca, Zunzal, and Las Flores; La Costa del Sol; and one of the most famous, El Tunco.

El Tunco

Tamanique: La Libertad. El Tunco beach (a very Salvadoran word for pigs) is the most iconic surfing destination in El Salvador. Its name comes from a huge rock, half submerged on the beach, which in ancient times resembled the shape of this friendly animal.

Visited weekly by hundreds of local and foreign tourists, what was once a small hamlet next to a quiet estuary in the 1970s and 1980s has become a must-see destination for international surfers and those seeking to immerse themselves in the bohemian and carefree surf culture.

Located at kilometer 42 on the Litoral Highway in La Libertad, just 40 minutes from San Salvador and the international airport, El Tunco Beach in El Salvador is a microcosm

where you can breathe in a cosmopolitan atmosphere, abundant fun, and the “chiva” vibe, as the locals say to express something really cool. The warmth, friendliness, and spirit of service of its people are the icing on the cake.

This surfing community offers everything you could possibly want for a spectacular trip.

Modest accommodation for backpackers, as well as for those who want something much more exclusive and private.

Food with all kinds of aromas and flavors, from typical Salvadoran pupusas and pastelitos, which are cooked and sold on the street, to homemade food, elaborate seafood dishes, Asian, Mexican, and Mediterranean cuisine, pizzas, hamburgers, and more.

Local beers and beers from remote corners of the world are available here, always ice cold.

Bars and nightclubs serve all kinds of cocktails.

If you want to taste the best coffee in El Salvador, you'll find it here.

- There are convenience stores and small pharmacies.
- Travel agencies can arrange your return trip home or your next destination.
- You can also hop on minibuses that travel throughout Central America.
- There are parking lots where you can leave your car.
- But above all, the surf vibe is in the DNA of this place, local surfers, with long hair, tanned skin, and perpetual smiles, mingle with every race imaginable, who come to this mecca smelling of sea and wax.
- Small shops provide you with surfing equipment, clothing, and accessories.
- There are craft stalls where you can buy a souvenir of El Salvador, as well as other forms of street art.

There are plenty of places where you can rent surfboards, while instructors offer you an introduction to the warm waves. In El Tunco, you can rent a bicycle, a scooter, or a car,

and if you prefer, there are plenty of drivers who will take you wherever you want to go and then bring you back safely to your accommodation.

As a sort of hub in the area, El Tunco can be your base for organizing and setting off on countless adventure, city, and food tours, among others.

But above all, this is a small world that screams surf, in its architecture, designs, colors, murals, clothing, and where you can breathe in the vibe of a world that moves slowly and invites you to be who you are. When it comes to surfing, El Tunco has it all.

The highest quality wave is La Bocana. A natural left-hander, rare on a coastline of right-handers, formed by the rocky bottom of the mouth of the Grande River. It is a powerful break that can handle waves up to 10 feet (3.5 meters) high, with thick, heavy lips, long lines, and sometimes tubes. Suitable only for advanced and expert surfers. It has the virtue of breaking consistently throughout most of the year.

On either side of the famous rock, where you can't help but take a picture, there are two sections that produce much smaller and gentler waves, suitable for beginners, but on epic days they can also show that surfing in El Salvador is world class.

If you want to visit El Tunco from San Salvador, take the highway to the port of La Libertad, then the Camino a Surf City bypass, and continue west on the Litoral highway until kilometer 43, where you will see the wooden arch that indicates you have arrived at the famous spot.

Figure 1

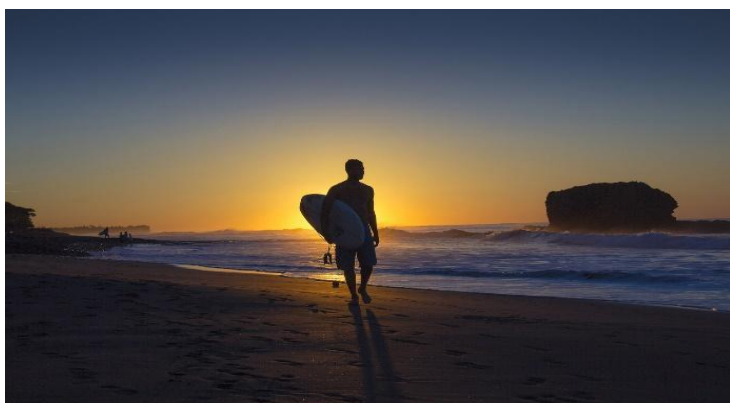
El Tunco Beach



Note. Beach El Tunco, El Salvador. Taken from Ministerio de Turismo de El Salvador, (s. f.).

Figure 2

El Tunco Beach



Note. Beach El Tunco, El Salvador. Taken from Ministerio de Turismo de El Salvador, (s. f.).

Figure 3

El Tunco Beach



Note. El Tunco Beach, El Salvador. Taken from benkrut, (2018).

Figure 4

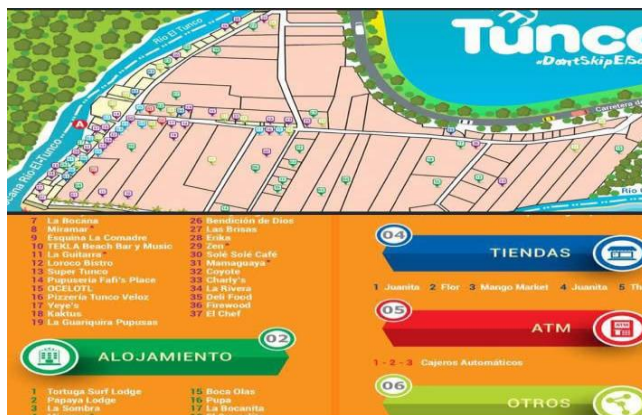
El Tunco Beach



Note. El Tunco Beach, El Salvador. Taken from Aguilar Vásquez, L. E., (2011).

Figure 5

Location



Note. Directions to Playa El Tunco, San Alfonso, Tamanique. Taken from Waze, (s. f.).

Izalco Volcano

It is important to know and understand what the youngest volcano in El Salvador and the world is, which remains active and represents a challenge for tourists.

Its name in Nahuatl means “place of black sands,” which characterize it to this day. It is also known as the “Lighthouse of the Pacific” because ships used to navigate by this natural colossus, thanks to its constant eruptions and lava flows.

Located within Los Volcanes National Park, at kilometer 63 of the road to Cerro Verde, between the departments of Sonsonate and Santa Ana, the Izalco Volcano is approximately 1 hour from San Salvador, offering one of the most impressive views in the western part of the country.

This volcano continues to be active and has a height of 1,950 meters above sea level and an angle of inclination of around 45°, standing imposingly amid the thick vegetation of the area. The climb is of medium difficulty (6/10), with weather conditions ranging from the highest to the lowest temperatures. Therefore, it is recommended to wear comfortable clothing, bring 1.5 liters of water, sunglasses, sunscreen, a hat, and footwear suitable for rough terrain.

This colossus is part of the Los Volcanes Complex, and admission costs \$1.50 for Salvadorans and \$3 for foreigners. Children under 6 and seniors enter free of charge. Visiting hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Figure 6

Izalco Volcano



Note. Izalco Volcano, Sonsonate, El Salvador. Taken from Gifex, (s. f.)

Figure 7

Izalco Volcano



Note. Izalco Volcano, El Salvador. Taken from Ministerio de Medio Ambiente de El Salvador, (s. f.).

Figure 8

Location



Note. Directions to Izalco Volcano, 1,952 m. Taken from Waze, (s. f.).

Apaneca

Welcome to one of the coolest destinations in El Salvador!

Apaneca's cool climate is offset by a cup of the highest quality coffee, harvested in the area. Apaneca is one of the destinations that make up the Ruta de Las Flores (Route of

Flowers). It is located in the department of Ahuachapán at 1,477 meters above sea level, an ideal place for lovers of cool weather.

Located at kilometer 95 of the Ruta de Las Flores in the department of Ahuachapán, Apaneca is just 1 hour and 30 minutes from San Salvador, surrounded by mountains, coffee plantations, and a cool climate that makes it one of the most visited tourist destinations in the western part of the country.

If ecotourism is your thing, Apaneca has destinations such as Laguna Verde and Laguna Las Ninfas, both ideal for hiking and exploring the flora and fauna of the area. At these destinations, you can also go zip-lining, mountain biking, and buggy riding, as the area has several destinations that invite you to test your skills.

The area also has curious and mystical places such as the Laberinto de Albania, a huge ecological maze that challenges you to find the exit; and the Hoyo de Cuajusto, an extinct volcanic crater that preserves some caves. Don't worry about accommodation, there is a cozy hostel in the area at an affordable price, and you can also choose between cabins or more rustic hotels. The colorful houses and craft shops will inspire you to take a stroll through the cobbled streets. In the city center, you can sample local cuisine such as Indian chicken soup, roast chicken, quesadillas, and more.

When it comes to food, both in the city center and in the surrounding areas, you will find a rich variety of traditional dishes (Biblioteca UJMD, s. f.).

Figure 9

Albania Maze



Note. Albania Maze, El Salvador. Taken from Ministerio de Turismo de El Salvador, (s. f.).

Figure 10

Albania Maze



Note. Apaneca: Place of Adventures, El Salvador. Taken from La Prensa Gráfica, (2021).

Figure 11

Location



Note. Directions to Apaneca, Ahuachapán. Taken from Waze, (s. f.).

Types of Soils in El Salvador

El Salvador has a remarkable variety of soils due to its volcanic origin, tropical climate, and mountainous topography. These factors have contributed to the formation of different types of soil, which in turn determine the country's agricultural, forestry, livestock, and conservation activities.

According to Prezi (s.f.), the main types of soils are detailed according to the USDA classification system, along with their characteristics, geographical distribution, and specific examples of use:

Andisols

Figure 11

Andisol soil



Note. Suelo Andisol. Taken from (*Los Andosoles (WRB 1998): Suelos Volcánicos - un Universo . . .*, s. f.).

Origin: Volcanic, from ashes, lava and other pyroclastic materials.

Characteristics: High fertility, good water retention, light texture, rich in organic matter, dark.

Distribution: Predominant in areas of volcanic influence such as the Apaneca-Ilamatepec mountain range (Ahuachapán, Sonsonate, Santa Ana), near the San Salvador Volcano, the San Vicente Volcano and the Chaparrastique Volcano (San Miguel).

Uses and examples:

High altitude coffee in Apaneca and Juayúa.

Vegetables such as tomato, chili and cabbage in the foothills of San Salvador Volcano.

Ornamental flowers in the highlands of Santa Tecla and Panchimalco.

Fruit trees such as avocado, peach and blackberry in Chalatenango and Santa Ana.

Inceptisols

Figure 12

Inceptisol Soil



Note. Inceptisol soil. Taken from (*INCEPTISOLES*, s. f.).

Origin: Soils in intermediate stage of formation, derived from volcanic or sedimentary rocks.

Characteristics: Moderate fertility, poorly evolved but stable soils, with some structure.

Distribution: Found in mountainous areas of Chalatenango, the Sierra de Nahuaterique, and parts of La Libertad and Cabañas.

Uses and examples:

Subsistence maize and bean cultivation.

Natural pastures for cattle in high areas.

Pine and oak forest areas in the north of Chalatenango and part of Morazán.

Entisols

Figure 13

Entisol soils



Note. Entisol soil. Taken from (*Los Entisoles Son Muy Poco Resistentes. Se Encuentran En . . .*, s. f.).

Origin: Very young soils formed by recent sediments deposited by rivers, wind or sea.

Characteristics: Low fertility, poor structure, variable texture (sand, silt).

Distribution: In the coastal plains of the Pacific coast, such as La Costa del Sol, El Tamarindo and Barra de Santiago, as well as along the banks of the Lempa River and other major rivers.

Uses and examples:

Watermelon and melon cultivation in coastal areas of Usulután.

Salt production in estuaries and artisanal salt pans (e.g., in San Luis La Herradura).

Tourism and urban expansion (construction of housing, hotels and restaurants).

Mangroves and artisanal fishing areas, such as in the Jaltepeque estuary.

Ultisols

Figure 14

Ultisol soil



Note. Ultisol soil. Taken from (*Ultisol - Wikipedia, la Enciclopedia Libre*, s. f.).

Origin: Old soils, highly leached by rainfall, with low nutrient content.

Characteristics: Reddish or yellowish, acid soils, with low natural fertility.

Distribution: Common in the east of the country: San Miguel (outside the volcanic area), Morazán, La Unión and part of Usulután.

Uses and examples:

Cultivation of maicillo and yucca in low altitude areas.

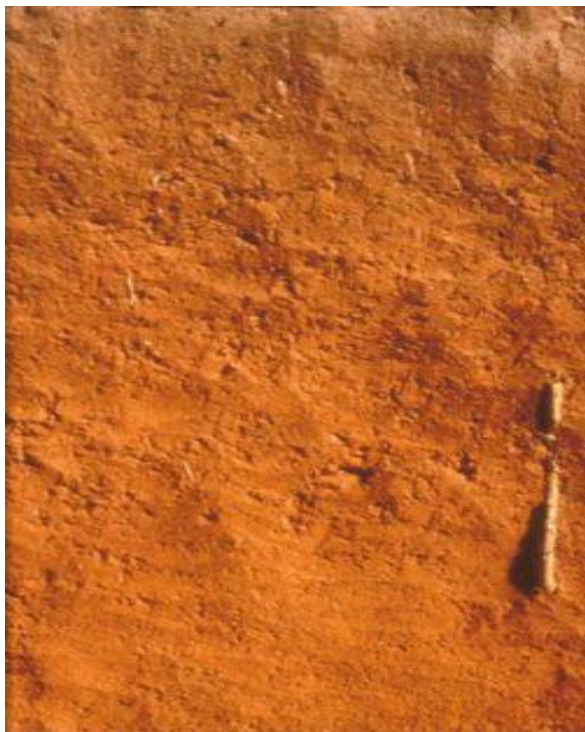
Extensive cattle raising (resistant pastures) in Pasaquina and El Carmen.

They require the use of fertilizers and pH correction to improve agricultural production.

Oxisols

Figure 15

Soil oxisol



Note. Oxisol soil. Taken from (*Oxisols / Soil & Water Systems / University Of Idaho*, s. f.).

Origin: Soils highly aged by the tropical climate, with high content of iron and aluminum oxides.

Characteristics: Deep red soils, poor in nutrients, acidic, with low nutrient retention capacity.

Distribution: Present in southern areas of La Unión and Usulután, and in areas of dense vegetation.

Uses and examples:

Generally used as forestry or protection areas.

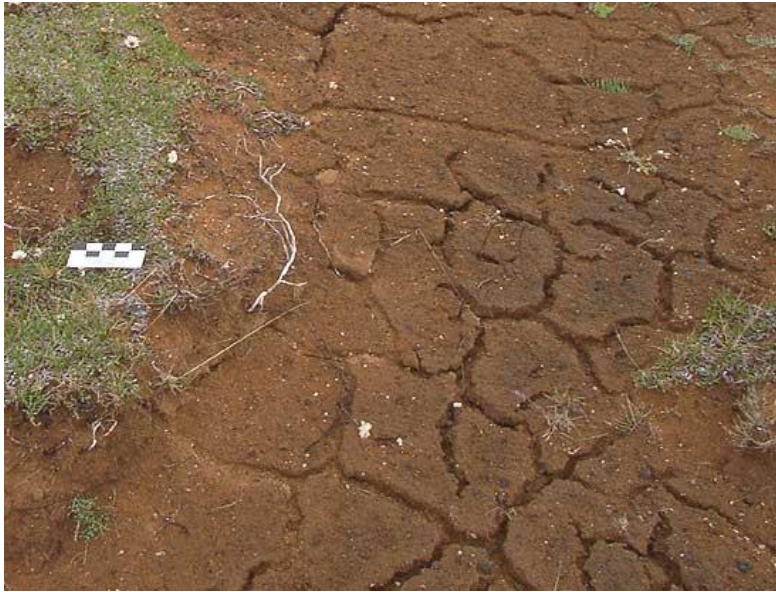
Some areas are used for reforestation and environmental conservation.

Cultivation of rustic plants such as jaragua grass or fast-growing trees (eucalyptus).

Vertisols

Figure 16

Vertisol Soil



Note. Vertisol soil. Taken from (*Vertisoles (WRB, 1998) - un Universo Invisible Bajo Nuestros Pies*, s. f.).

Origin: Soils with high expansive clay content.

Characteristics: Cracks in dry season and expands with humidity. They are difficult to work mechanically, but fertile if properly handled.

Distribution: They are found in the Zapotitán Valley (La Libertad and Sonsonate), San Vicente, Cuscatlán and part of La Paz.

Uses and examples:

1. Sugar cane in lowland areas of the Zapotitán Valley.
2. Rice cultivation in humid areas with irrigation (such as San Pedro Perulapán).
3. Improved pastures for dairy cattle in San Vicente.
4. In some areas, these soils are used for artisanal brick making, taking advantage of the clay.

As a conclusion, El Salvador has a wealth of soils that, properly managed, can sustain agricultural production and improve the quality of rural life. Understanding the classification

and characteristics of each type of soil allows for efficient use of the country's natural resources. Soil knowledge and conservation are key to confront climate change, guarantee food security and promote sustainable rural development throughout the national territory.

Cultural Identity, Intangible Tourist Resources.

Celebration

International Marlin Fishing Tournament.

Figure 17

International Marlin Fishing Tournament.



Note. Image of the International Marlin Fishing Tournament. Taken from (*Migración y . . . - Migración y Extranjería el Salvador, s. f.*).

30 Years of the International Marlin Fishing Tournament: An Icon of Sport Fishing and Tourism Development. Since its inception in 1994, this tournament has not only positioned itself as a prestigious sport fishing competition in Central America, but also as an economic and tourism driver that attracts participants from around the world. With the vision of its founder, Marco Antonio Zablah, the event has contributed significantly to the growth of

the Salvadoran tourism industry, and its impact on the local economy continues to be key to the development of the region.

Over the past 30 years, the tournament has won the preference of fishermen not only from El Salvador, but also from countries such as Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, the United States, and more, who return each year to compete and enjoy the beautiful coastline of El Salvador. This year, from November 5 to 8, the tournament promises a special celebration in honor of all those who have been part of its history, with an international call for entries that highlights the beauty and marine biodiversity of El Salvador.

Beyond the competition, the International Marlin Fishing Tournament is a platform that promotes tourism and shows the world the natural wonders of the Salvadoran coast. The event has attracted more than 800 guests each year, generating a positive impact on local commerce and services, from lodging to restaurants and recreational activities. At the same time, it highlights the importance of marine conservation, promoting responsible fishing practices and sustainability for the future. The tournament complies with international guidelines through the IGFA, which guarantees compliance with sport fishing regulations and the preservation of marine ecosystems (Redaccion, 2024).

Feria del Jocote Corona

Figure 18

Feria del Jocote Corona



Note. Image of the Jocote Corona Fair. Taken from (*Cientos de Turistas Disfrutan de la Feria del Jocote de Corona . . .*, s. f.).

Cerro Verde hosts the Jocote Corona Fair, a festival full of flavor and tradition. Visitors enjoy dishes, drinks, and desserts made with jocote, as well as music, walks, and family activities. It is an event that supports local producers and highlights Salvadoran culture.

According to Franco (2023b), it is estimated that each of the farms located on the slopes of Cerro Verde produces approximately 23,000 jocotes per day during the harvest period, achieving an average harvest of between 185,000 and 250,000 jocotes per farm, resulting in an estimated harvest of more than 3 million Jocotes Corona, just in the vicinity of Cerro Verde Natural Park.

On the other hand, this type of initiative also seeks to directly benefit the communities, producers, and micro-entrepreneurs who live in the area, opening up new opportunities for the development of local tourism, promoting the identity and traditions of these destinations, and generating approximately 60 temporary jobs.

For this edition of the fair, visitors will be able to purchase innovative products made with great creativity, including natural exfoliants made from crushed jocote seeds and necklaces made from resin, in which dehydrated jocote seeds are encapsulated, among other products made by Salvadoran hands. In total, 12 product categories are participating this year: handicrafts, beverages, jewelry, footwear, natural cosmetics, traditional sweets, gastronomy, desserts, ice cream, snacks, textiles, and jellies.

Of course, you can't miss the delicious jocote-based cuisine, such as French desserts like macarons and eclairs made with jocote jelly, artisanal pizza with chipotle and jocote dressing, cold drinks with espresso and jocote extract, ice cream with traditional Salvadoran flavors like jocote in honey, or even the jocote cheesecake version, to name a few (Franco, 2023d).

National Route of Flowers Day

Figure 19

National Route of Flowers Day



Note. Image of National Flower Route Day. Taken from (Corsatur, 2022).

National Flower Route Day has been celebrated every first Sunday in October since 2014, when it was declared by legislative decree and recognized by the Ministry of Tourism as an area of national tourist interest. The commemoration seeks to highlight the cultural, historical, and natural wealth of the municipalities along the route through food festivals, parades, music, crafts, and cultural activities, attracting thousands of tourists and strengthening the local economy.

The Flower Route is made up of the municipalities of Ataco and Apaneca, in Ahuachapán; and Salcoatitán, Juayúa, and Nahuizalco, in Sonsonate. Although each one has special tourist attractions, the most visited are usually Juayúa for its food festival on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as the train ride and horse-drawn carriages.

Ataco is another municipality that is among the favorites of Salvadorans, especially those who live in the western part of the country, due to its varied cuisine and nightlife. Nahuizalco stands out for its furniture and handicrafts made of wood and other materials, as does Salcoatitán, while Apaneca attracts tourists for its restaurants and hotels, as well as its cool climate and varied cuisine (Corsatur, 2022).

Syncretism

The Day of the Cross

Figure 20

Day of the Cross



Note. Image of the Day of the Cross. Taken from (Con la Participación de. . . - Universidad de Oriente :Oficial . . . , s. f.).

The Day of the Cross is a custom or syncretic tradition that blends Christian and indigenous elements. The director general of Multiculturalism, Alberto Cruz, shared that, according to the elders, the cross is placed so that “the devil does not come to dance in the houses,” but it has a deeper meaning because it marks an important time for crops and celebrates the seed so that it will bear its best fruit in the rainy season that is beginning.

Decorated with colorful Chinese paper, lots of seasonal fruit, and a palanca filled with fruit, the jiote cross was placed between the facades of the Ministries of Culture and Education, allowing officials and employees of both institutions to perform the ritual of the Holy Cross (crossing themselves, bowing, and taking its fruit).

“The cross is made from the jiote tree, which is a tree that is reborn after being cut down and replanted in the ground. It is said to allude to the god Xipe Totec, a being who reincarnates, just like the seed that dies to germinate and come back to life,” said Cruz.

The celebration was accompanied by the folk dance group from the Casa de la Cultura de Panchimalco, the Asociación Folclórica Cultura Viva Soacha from Bogotá, Colombia, and the Mexican regional dance group Tecpatl from Tepatitlán, Morelos, Jalisco, who delighted the audience with colorful performances typical of their towns (Fernández, 2023).

Day of the Dead or All Souls' Day

Figure 21

Day of the Dead or All Souls' Day



Note. Image of Day of the Dead. Taken from (*Variedades Isa - Variedades Isa Added A New Photo.*, s. f.).

Among the various commemorative dates on the Salvadoran calendar, November 2, All Souls' Day in El Salvador, is one of the most important, as it allows people to remember and honor their deceased loved ones. This commemoration, also known as All Souls' Day, allows Salvadorans to visit cemeteries to visit their relatives and loved ones. Due to its importance, it is a national holiday in the country.

All Souls' Day is one of several memorial days on the Catholic calendar. According to the Spanish Broadcasting Corporation, this holiday spread in 998 thanks to Odilon of Cluny, also known as Saint Odilon, who popularized this commemoration until it was accepted around the 16th century. Thus, every November 2, the deceased are remembered internationally. On the other hand, its arrival in El Salvador probably occurred with the Spanish, at the time when they conquered Salvadoran lands (Herrera, 2023).

Gastronomy

Riguas

Figure 22

Riguas



Note. Image of Riguas. Taken from (*Parroquia San Jose Verapaz*, s. f.).

The history of Juayúa's gastronomy has deep roots dating back to pre-Columbian times. The indigenous people who inhabited the region already cultivated corn, beans, squash, and other ingredients that would become the basis of their diet. With the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century, new ingredients such as wheat, rice, and various spices were introduced. These elements merged with local traditions, giving rise to a rich and varied

cuisine. Juayúa, in particular, stands out for preserving many of these traditional recipes and adapting them to its unique style.

Some of the typical dishes are:

Riguas are a type of corn pancake filled with cheese and pork rinds. They are cooked on the grill and are ideal to accompany your meals or as a snack at any time of the day (Alberto, 2023).

Fried Yuca with Pork Rinds

Figure 23

Fried Yuca with Pork Rinds



Note. Image of fried Yuca with pork rinds. Taken from (*A Saborear una Deliciosa Yuca Frita!!!*, s. f.).

Fried or boiled cassava from El Salvador is a traditional dish with roots in the indigenous cultures of Central and South America. The preparation and tasting of this emblematic recipe from the region is an experience that connects people with their culinary roots.

In the kitchen, a large pot of water and salt is brought to a boil. The yuca is peeled and cut into large pieces, then placed in the pot and cooked for 10 to 15 minutes until the yuca is fluffy. Once ready, it is removed from the heat and cut into small portions.

If you want to fry the yuca, place it in a pan with hot oil and fry for 3 to 5 minutes, making sure to cut it into long pieces. Finally, serve the yuca hot with pork rinds, curtido, or tomato sauce, accompanied by other ingredients to taste (*Cómo Se Hace la Yuca Frita o Sancochada*, 2024b).

Seafood platter

Figure 24

Seafood soup



Note. Image of Seafood Soup. Taken from (*La Placita Ciudad Barrios - Todos los Sabados de Mariscos .. Ricas . . .*, s. f.).

This delicious Salvadoran-style seafood soup. With all the flavors that the seafood of the Costa del Sol has to offer, this soup is sure to lift anyone's spirits. To make this powerful Salvadoran seafood soup, we will start by peeling the shrimp and setting aside the shells. Then, put enough water (approximately 2 liters) in a medium pot and boil the fish head along with the shrimp shells, onion, garlic, pepper, and salt to taste until everything is well cooked

(about 25 minutes). Remove the bones from the fish head, making sure to leave only the meat. Similarly, remove the shrimp shells and throw them away or use them as fertilizer for your plants.

In a larger pot, prepare a sofrito with the tomatoes, green chili, 1/2 bunch of cilantro, garlic, and onion to taste. You can also add powdered shrimp bouillon. Then add the crabs, squid, octopus, prawns, or lobsters, plus salt to taste (if needed). Next, add the broth that was set aside and let it boil for about 20 minutes. Then add the clams and shrimp and let it boil again for another 15 minutes. Then add the fish, previously cleaned, deboned, and cut into pieces, and continue boiling the soup for another 10 minutes. Taste the seasoning to see if it needs a little more salt, and it's ready (Celina, 2015).

Legends

The Cuyancua

Figure 25

The Cuyancua



Note. Image of the Cuyancúa. Taken from (*En La Zona Occidental del País, Existe una Leyenda Muy Famosa: La . . .*, s. f.).

Legend has it that at night in a town called Izalco, in the municipality of Sonsonate, El Salvador, a kind of eerie croaking or screeching sound could be heard, followed by strong tremors underground. This was produced by the Cuyancúa, a strange creature that appeared to have the body of a snake, two front claws, and the head of a pig. Hearing it caused panic among the locals, causing them to lock themselves in their homes at an early hour. This sound was heard mainly around rivers and streams, where the Cuyancúa crawled in search of food. The Cuyancúa had inhabited that place for centuries, terrorizing the residents of Izalco. It was said to be a vengeful spirit that had been cursed by an ancient witch, condemned to wander for eternity in that grotesque form.

As the tremors and squawks increased in intensity, the villagers lived in fear and uncertainty. Some reported having had contact with the Cuyancua. Those who look at her may suffer fainting spells, fevers, and loss of speech for some time due to the shock of seeing her, so it is best to adopt a submissive, respectful attitude, close your eyes, and entrust yourself to God, praying with devotion.

However, it is also said that where the Cuyancua dug, crystal-clear water sprang forth, which is why the Izalco region has an abundance of springs and streams. Thanks to the presence of the Cuyancua and her connection to underground water sources, the town of Izalco benefited from abundant crystal-clear springs and streams that spread throughout the region. The locals recognized the blessing this represented and devotedly cared for the springs and streams that emerged in each place where the Cuyancua had dug. These bodies of water became community gathering places, sacred sites where people came to drink, purify themselves, and share moments of joy (OmarNipolan, s. f.).

The Cadejo

Figure 26

The White and Black Cadejo



Note. Image of the White and Black Cadejo. Taken from (*Cadejo Blanco y Cadejo Negro – Parqueología Migrante*, s. f.)

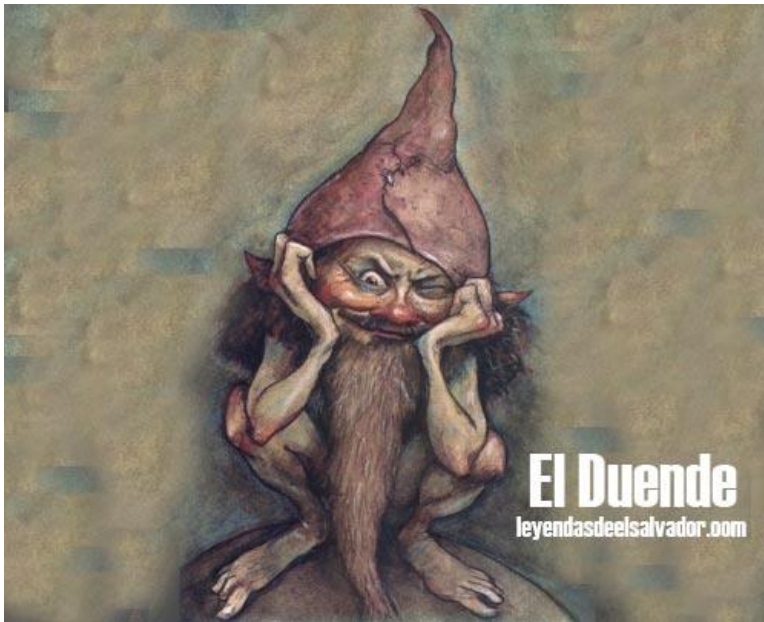
The Cadejo is a spirit that appears in the form of a large dog. There are two types of Cadejo: white and black. The white Cadejo is good and protects travelers from the dangers of the road. But the black Cadejo is evil and chases people to scare them or hurt them.

People who have seen the black Cadejo say that its eyes glow in the dark and that its breath smells very bad. When it attacks, it leaves its victims paralyzed with fear. Fortunately, the white Cadejo appears to chase it away and save nighttime travelers. Many believe that this being is a guardian of the roads and only appears to those who are in danger (Vasquez, 2025).

The Duende

Figure 27

The Duende



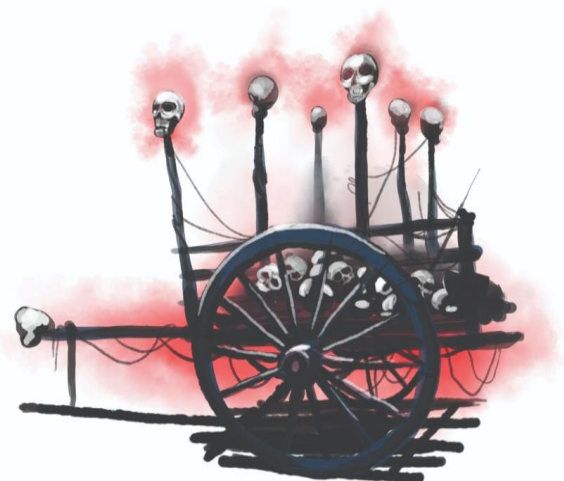
Note. Image of the Duende. Taken from (*El Duende - Leyendas de el Salvador*, s. f.).

The Duende is a tiny, mischievous creature that inhabits the forests and rural areas of El Salvador. El Duende is said to be playful and prone to mischief, but it can also be protective if treated with respect. In Salvadoran culture, the myth of El Duende is a way of explaining unexplained events in nature and teaching the importance of caring for and respecting the environment (TeamUserAdmNewWeb, 2023).

The Carreta Chillona

Figure 28

The Carreta Chillona



Note. Image of the Carreta Chillona. Taken from (*La Leyenda de “La Carreta Chillona” y Su Relación Con la Epidemia . . .*, s. f.).

The Carreta Chillona is a ghostly carriage that appears on the darkest nights. Although almost no one has seen it directly, its presence is felt by the horrible sound it makes. It is said that its old, rusty wheels squeak loudly and that anyone who hears it is in danger, as it is a sign that someone will die soon.

Some witnesses say that the cart is driven by a skeleton and moves slowly along the cobbled streets. It is said that if anyone tries to follow it, they will never be able to find its origin or destination. The best thing to do when you hear its noise is to pray and not look out the window (Vasquez, 2025).

Stories

Treasure of Cerro Verde

Figure 29

Treasure of Cerro Verde



Note. Image of Cerro Verde. Taken from (*Parque Recreativo Cerro Verde | el Salvador*, s. f.).

Cerro Verde is a volcano located in the department of Santa Ana in El Salvador. According to one story, there is a hidden treasure deep inside this volcano. It is said that the treasure is protected by spirits and mythical creatures, and only those who are worthy and brave will be able to find it. The legend of the Treasure of Cerro Verde has sparked the curiosity and imagination of many people over the years (TeamUserAdmNewWeb, 2023).

Voices and Shadows in Cerro Verde

Figure 30

Cerro Verde at night



Note. Image of Cerro Verde at night. Taken from (*Instituto Salvadoreño de Turismo*, s. f.).

In Cerro Verde, it is said that when the fog descends and covers the trails, some visitors hear mysterious voices that seem to come from deep within the forest. Sometimes they are whispers, other times distant cries or laughter that blend with the wind.

Those who have tried to follow these voices claim to have seen shadows walking among the trees, human figures that vanish as soon as one tries to approach them. But what is most disturbing is that many report seeing the silhouette of a woman dressed in black, who

appears and disappears in the mist. Some believe that this is the Siguanaba, the enchanted woman who, according to tradition, frightens those who dare to follow her.

In addition, there are those who claim that Cerro Verde is an energy point, a place where a special force of nature is concentrated, capable of attracting both the spiritual and the mysterious (AhuachaCity503, 2025).

The Haunted House in La Puntilla

Figure 31

Haunted House in La Puntilla



Note. Image of Haunted House. Taken from (*La Casa Embrujada! 📍Playa la Puntilla, Costa del Sol, la Paz. El . . . , s. f.*).

The cracked structure, leaning to the left and nestled in the sands of that famous beach, is not a house. In the past, 25 years ago, it was a hotel called Hotel Puerto Ventura. Its unfortunate history tells that the owners of that hotel decided to build it several meters inland from the beach, but the force of nature prevailed, and over the years, the waves of the sea battered the structure, flooding it until the hotel was forced to close.

Some versions of the locals indicate that it was in 1998, during Hurricane Mitch, that the structure was damaged, so it ceased to be a hotel and later became the headquarters of a

Christian church. That explains the Star of David in high relief, made of cement on the roof of the first floor.

The place has taken on a mysterious aura, as according to Coralia, local young people have told her that at night they see a tall black man. “The boys who come at night to catch turtles told me they have seen a tall black man,” she added. She herself has never seen anything, as she insists she does not like to go near the abandoned house, let alone enter the ruins (La Prensa Gráfica, 2021).

The principle for sustainable tourism

Figure 32

Principles for Sustainable Tourism



Note. Image of the Principles for Sustainable Tourism. Taken from (*Qué Es y Cómo Desarrollar el Turismo Sostenible En Tu Destino?*, s. f.-c).

1. End poverty

Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international levels, based on pro-poor development strategies that take gender issues into account, in order to support accelerated investment in measures to eradicate poverty.

2. Zero Hunger

By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and those in vulnerable situations, including children under 1 year of age, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food throughout the year.

3. Good Health and Well-Being

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages is fundamental to achieving the sustainable development of the 17 sustainable development principles. Great progress has been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the most common causes of death related to infant and maternal mortality. Great strides have been made in increasing access to clean water and sanitation, reducing malaria, tuberculosis, polio, and the spread of HIV/AIDS. However, much more needs to be done to completely eradicate a wide range of diseases and address numerous and varied persistent and emerging health issues.

4. Quality Education

Achieving quality education is the foundation for improving people's lives and sustainable development. Significant progress has been made in improving access to education at all levels and increasing school enrollment rates, especially for women and girls. The minimum level of literacy has increased significantly, although greater efforts are needed to achieve further progress towards universal education goals. For example, gender parity in primary education has been achieved worldwide, but few countries have achieved this goal at all levels of education.

5. Gender equality

While global progress has been made on gender equality through the Millennium Development Goals (including equal access to primary education for girls and boys), women and girls continue to face discrimination and violence everywhere in the world.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but also the necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, healthcare, decent work, and representation in political and

economic decision-making processes will boost sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity as a whole.

6. Clean water and sanitation

Clean water that is accessible to all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is enough fresh water on the planet to achieve this dream. Water scarcity, poor water quality, and inadequate sanitation negatively impact food security, livelihood options, and educational opportunities for poor families around the world. Drought affects some of the world's poorest countries, exacerbating hunger and malnutrition. By 2050, at least one in four people will likely live in a country affected by chronic and repeated freshwater shortages.

7. Affordable and clean energy

Energy is central to almost all of the major challenges and opportunities facing the world today. Whether for jobs, security, climate change, food production, or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential. Sustainable energy is an opportunity that transforms lives, economies, and the planet.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is leading the Sustainable Energy for All initiative to ensure universal access to modern energy services, improve efficiency, and increase the use of renewable sources.

8. Decent work and economic growth

Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Maintain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and gross domestic product growth of at least 7% per year in the least developed countries.

9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

Investments in infrastructure (transportation, irrigation, energy, and information and communications technology) are essential to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries.

It has long been recognized that investments in infrastructure are necessary to achieve increased productivity and income and improvements in health and education outcomes. The pace of growth and urbanization is also creating a need for new investments in sustainable infrastructure that will enable cities to be more resilient to climate change and drive economic growth and social stability. In addition to government funding and official development assistance, private sector financing is being promoted for countries in need of financial, technological, and technical support.

10. Reducing inequalities

The international community has made great strides in lifting people out of poverty. The most vulnerable nations, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states continue to make progress in poverty reduction. However, inequalities and large disparities in access to health and education services and other productive assets remain.

Furthermore, although income inequality between countries has been reduced, inequality within countries has increased. There is a growing consensus that economic growth is not sufficient to reduce poverty if it is not inclusive and does not take into account the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.

11. Sustainable Cities and Communities

Cities are hotbeds of ideas, commerce, culture, science, productivity, social development, and much more. At their best, cities have enabled people to progress socially and economically. However, there are many challenges to maintaining cities in a way that continues to create jobs and prosperity without putting pressure on land and resources. Common problems in cities include congestion, lack of funds to provide basic services, shortage of adequate housing, and deteriorating infrastructure.

12. Responsible Consumption and Production

Sustainable consumption and production involve promoting efficient use of resources and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and facilitating access to basic services, green and decent jobs, and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation helps achieve overall development plans, reduce future economic, environmental, and social costs, increase economic competitiveness, and reduce poverty.

The goal of sustainable consumption and production is to do more and better things with fewer resources, increasing the net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing resource use, degradation, and pollution throughout the life cycle, while achieving a better quality of life. Various stakeholders are involved in this process, including businesses, consumers, policymakers, researchers, scientists, retailers, the media, and development cooperation agencies.

13. Climate action

Climate change affects all countries on all continents. It has a negative impact on the national economy and on the lives of individuals, communities, and countries. In the future, the consequences will be even worse. People are experiencing the consequences of climate change firsthand, including changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels, and more extreme weather events.

Greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities are increasing this threat. In fact, emissions have never been higher. If we do not act, the average surface temperature of the world could rise by about 3 degrees Celsius this century, and in some areas of the planet it could be even worse. The poorest and most vulnerable people will be the most affected.

14. Life Below Water

The world's oceans, their temperature, chemistry, currents, and life drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humanity. Our rainfall, drinking water, climate, weather, coastlines, much of our food, and even the oxygen in the air we breathe ultimately come from and are regulated by the sea.

Historically, oceans and seas have been vital channels for trade and transportation. Prudent management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future.

15. Life on Land

Thirty percent of the Earth's surface is covered by forests, which, in addition to providing food security and shelter, are essential for combating climate change, as they protect biological diversity and the homes of indigenous peoples. Every year, 13 million hectares of forest disappear, and the persistent degradation of arid areas has led to the desertification of 3.6 billion hectares. Deforestation and desertification caused by human activities and climate change pose major challenges to sustainable development and have affected the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the fight against poverty. Measures are being put in place for forest management and the fight against desertification.

16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates worldwide.

17. Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Strengthen the mobilization of domestic resources, including through international support to developing countries, to improve national capacity for tax and other revenue collection (cayab_editorial, 2022).

Strategic Plan: Quality control, customer satisfaction.

Strategic quality plan

Table 1

Strategic quality plan, action, roles, improvements or promotion.

ACTION	ROLES	IMPROVEMENTS/ PROMOTION
Provide professional photography service with a decorative frame featuring the company logo during tours and activities.	Francisco-Photographer in charge of capturing high-quality images that reflect the uniqueness of each experience and strengthen the company’s visual identity.	Special gift for guests who share their photos on social networks and tag us to help increase brand visibility.
Organize themed weekend experiences, such as beach sunset bonfires, yoga on the volcano, or other seasonal events to enhance the tour experience.	Yeni-Event Coordinator responsible for planning, organizing, and supervising special events to ensure guests enjoy unique and unforgettable activities.	Launch the “Weekend Magic” package, which includes a free drink and a 10% discount for guests to encourage bookings during low-demand seasons.
Create a loyalty program with exclusive points and benefits for returning clients, redeemable for discounts or additional experiences.	Francisco and Yeni-Marketing and Customer Service Team responsible for managing the client database, tracking purchase history, and offering personalized benefits.	“Xplora Client” card that accumulates points on each tour and allows redemption for free activities or service upgrades, encouraging repeat visits.
Offer a short photography workshop so visitors can learn to capture better images during the tour.	Francisco-Photographer responsible for delivering the training and guiding tourists in practical photography.	Free workshop included in premium packages or as a benefit for booking two or more experiences with the company.

Note. It describes the action, roles, improvements and promotion we as Xplora Tours will take to distinguish our tour operator from others. Table created by Segura and Rosales (2025).

The Xplora Tours action plan was created with the aim of differentiating the company from other tour operators by offering unique experiences and added value to customers. This plan seeks to strengthen the brand's identity, increase visibility on social media, and generate loyalty through benefits programs and special promotions. In addition, it allows the company to attract new customers and retain existing ones, encouraging repeat business and taking advantage of low-demand seasons. In short, it is a strategy to innovate in the tourism market, consolidate customer trust, and ensure the company's sustainable growth.

Strategic quality plan, customer satisfaction.

Figure 33

Strategic quality plan for customer satisfaction



Note. Strategic quality plan for customer satisfaction. Infographic created by Segura and Rosales in Canva (2025).

1. Expert and trained guides

Xplora Tours stands out for its expert local tourism guides, who are knowledgeable about every trail, beach, and cultural corner of El Salvador. But they don't just stand out for their experience, but also for their kind, approachable, and friendly manner. They are the first

impression our customers receive, which is why their training includes customer service values, empathy, and a passion for showing off the best of our country. Their attitude makes every trip safe, educational, and enjoyable, ensuring that every visitor feels at home from the moment they arrive.

2. Excellent customer service

At Xplora Tours, we believe that the quality of a tourist experience depends largely on the attention our travelers receive. That's why we prioritize warm, respectful, and attentive customer service at every stage: from booking to accompanying travelers on their tours. Our team is ready to listen, answer questions, and adapt to each person's needs, ensuring that everyone feels valued. This dedication not only builds trust and comfort, but also turns each experience into a positive memory that customers want to share and repeat.

3. Positive online reviews

We understand the importance of digital reputation. That's why every satisfied customer becomes an ambassador for our brand, sharing their positive experiences on platforms such as Google, Facebook, and TripAdvisor. We encourage constant feedback, as each comment helps us improve and better position ourselves with future customers. Genuine reviews are our best calling card, as they reflect our real commitment to service quality and traveler satisfaction.

4. Online trust that attracts new travelers

Success in the digital world depends on the trust we project. Through real testimonials, authentic photographs, and transparent communication on our networks, we build a bond of trust with those who do not yet know us. We know that today's tourists do their research before deciding, so we work to ensure that the information online accurately reflects what we offer. This digital trust is the key to attracting new travelers, who arrive with high expectations and become loyal new customers.

5. Continuous growth of the company

Our quality plan is geared toward sustained growth, not only in the number of customers, but also in the quality of each service we provide. We are constantly innovating with new routes, better experiences, and optimization of internal processes. Each new project is focused on strengthening the company, generating local jobs, and positioning ourselves as leaders in domestic tourism in El Salvador. This growth is not random, but part of a clear strategy that prioritizes customer satisfaction as the engine of expansion.

6. Loyalty and higher profits

Customer loyalty is a strategic priority. A satisfied traveler not only returns, but also recommends our services to family and friends, generating a network of loyal customers. We offer exclusive incentives, discounts, and personalized experiences to maintain that connection. This loyalty strategy ensures consistent and stable revenue, allowing the company to achieve higher profits in the long term. We know that real profitability does not lie in a single trip, but in creating lasting relationships with each tourist.

CHAPTER III:

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A TOURISM PRODUCT OR SERVICE

Entrepreneur Profile

The entrepreneur is a central figure in the economic and social development of any community. This is a person who not only identifies opportunities, but is also willing to take risks, mobilize resources and execute actions that generate new value. Drucker (1985) points out that the entrepreneur is the one who detects change and transforms it into an opportunity, turning ideas into tangible projects.

The concept of entrepreneurship goes beyond the simple creation of companies: it implies a systematic process of innovation, planning, resource management and generation of social impact. Hisrich, Peters and Shepherd (2017) emphasize that entrepreneurship contributes to local development by generating employment, strengthening the economy and promoting a culture of innovation in society.

Characteristics and Qualities of the Entrepreneur

Successful entrepreneurs tend to share a number of essential qualities, which develop with experience and training. Byrnes (2014) identifies core competencies such as vision, creativity, initiative, resilience, leadership, ethics and customer orientation.

These competencies are described in more detail below:

Vision: Allows projecting opportunities and anticipating future trends, facilitating strategic planning.

Creativity and innovation: Ability to generate disruptive ideas or improve existing products and services.

Initiative and proactivity: Do not wait for circumstances to dictate actions; make decisions autonomously.

Risk-taking ability: Assess uncertainty and act with control to take advantage of

opportunities.

Resilience and persistence: Overcoming failures, learning from mistakes and sustaining effort over the long term.

Leadership and communication: Inspire, coordinate and motivate teams to achieve common goals.

Ethics and responsibility: Act with integrity, consistency and social commitment.

Adaptability and flexibility: Adjust to changes in the market, regulations or customer preferences.

Customer Orientation: Focus on satisfying real needs and improving the user experience.

Planning and organization: Manage resources, define goals and ensure the effective execution of the project.

In the tourism context of El Salvador, these qualities translate into practical skills such as designing ecotourism experiences, cultural routes or personalized services that promote local identity, strengthen the economy of communities and ensure environmental sustainability.

Types of Entrepreneurs

There are different types of entrepreneurs according to their motivation and approach (Hisrich et al., 2017):

Innovative: Develops disruptive products or services that transform the market.

Visionary: Anticipates future trends and plans long-term strategies.

Social: Its main objective is to generate social or community impact, beyond profit.

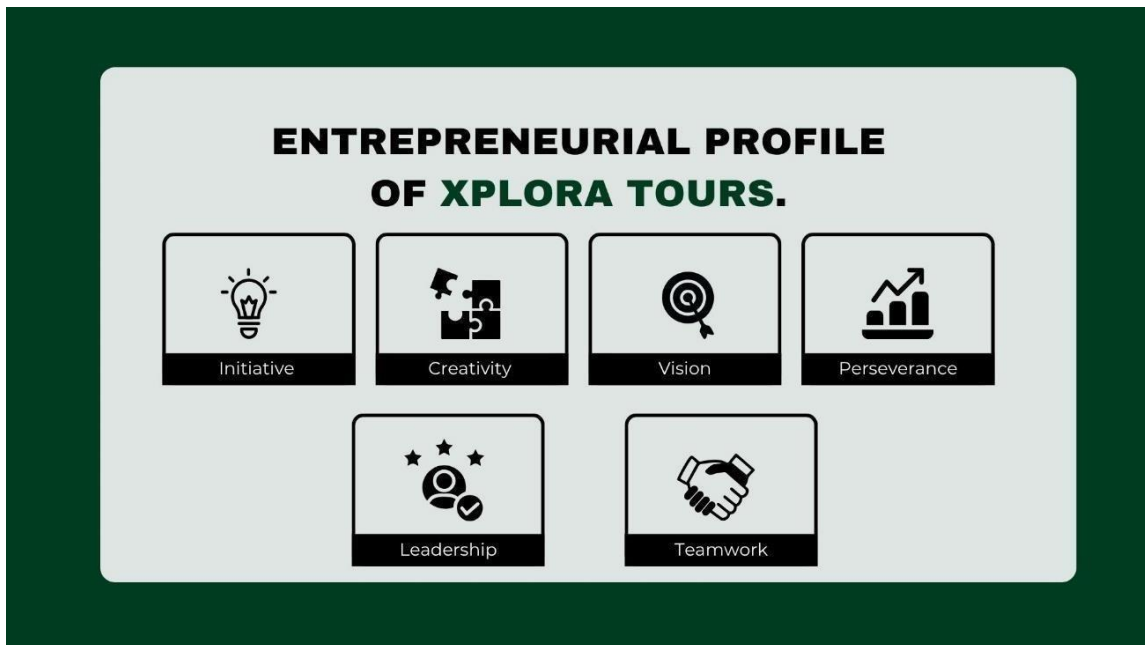
Opportunistic: Quickly takes advantage of emerging market opportunities. **Specialist:**

Operates in niches where it has technical knowledge or deep experience.

Xplora Tours entrepreneurial profile

Figure 1

Entrepreneurial profile of Xplora Tours



Note: Entrepreneurial profile of Xplora Tours. Image created by Segura and Rosales in Canva (2025).

1. Initiative

It represents us because we are a group that takes action, proposes ideas and constantly looks for new opportunities to improve the project without waiting for others to do it first.

2. Creativity

It characterizes us because we always seek to innovate, offer different experiences and find original solutions that make Xplora Tours a unique company in the tourism field.

3. Vision

Reflects our ability to look to the future, plan clear goals and work with purpose so that our venture grows and consolidates in the tourism market.

4. Perseverance

It represents us because, as a group, we do not give up in the face of challenges. We know that every project requires effort, perseverance and commitment to achieve the results we desire.

5. Leadership

This is one of our strengths, since each member brings skills to guide, motivate and coordinate the team, fostering an environment of respect and shared responsibility.

6. Teamwork

It defines us because we value collaboration, communication and mutual support. We know that only by uniting our abilities we can achieve the success of Xplora Tours and offer a quality service.

We chose these qualities because they represent the values and attitudes that we consider essential for the success of Xplora Tours. We believe that a true entrepreneur must have initiative to act, creativity to innovate, vision to project the future, perseverance to overcome challenges, leadership to guide the team and teamwork to achieve common goals. All of these together reflect the entrepreneurial and collaborative spirit that characterizes our group and that we want to transmit through our tourism project.

Social responsibility of entrepreneur

What is social responsibility?

Social responsibility is an essential strategic element in contemporary enterprises. Carroll (1991) defines social responsibility as the voluntary commitment of organizations to generate positive social, economic and environmental impacts, going beyond legal minimums.

Dimensions of Social Responsibility

CSR is applied in multiple dimensions, each with practical implications for business development:

Internal: Improvement of working conditions, staff training and welfare.

Environmental: Sustainable use of resources, waste management and ecosystem conservation.

Community: Active participation in local projects, education, culture and economic development.

Ethical: Transparency, integrity and compliance with regulations.

Socially productive: Inclusion of vulnerable groups in the value chain and creation of opportunities.

Ethics and Social Responsibility of Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur's ethical and socially responsible behavior is relevant to business. Entrepreneurs need to apply moral values to their business dealings. Ethical business conduct encompasses integrity, fairness, and transparency in business operations.

Ethical entrepreneurs bring favorable publicity to their brands. Good in the eyes of consumers, employees, and investors. Ethical standards also limit the legal liability risks and maximize the potential profit for the foreseeable future (Plutus Education, s. f.).

Honesty and Integrity: They should maintain the truth regarding their products and services.

Fair Trade Practices: Ensures that fair wages and safe working conditions are maintained for the employees.

Environmental Responsibility: One should always attempt to minimize waste while complying with sustainable business practices.

Customer Respect: One earns loyal customers through good-quality delivery of products and services.

Community Engagement: One's dedication to local communities through charitable efforts is that of an ethical entrepreneur.

Benefits of Social Responsibility of Entrepreneurs

Social responsibility is beyond mere moral obligations; it is a strategic advantage. Entrepreneurs should combine social responsibility into their business models. It will experience growth, stability, and public goodwill.

Some of these benefits are:

Brand Image and Reputation:

Customers prefer doing business with organizations that care about social and environmental concerns. A good reputation results in high customer satisfaction and trust. Responsible organizations place themselves in the long run for success. They adapt to society's high expectations of the day. Sustainability practices make businesses

more resilient and flexible.

Higher Employee Satisfaction and Retention:

Companies consider employees' well-being and ethical practices. It motivates and engages workers, reducing turnover and increasing productivity. Ethical businesses attract responsible investors looking for sustainable and socially responsible companies. These businesses attract more investors ready to support their long-term sustainability goals.

Better Customer Relations and Sales Growth:

Consumers are more likely to support businesses that contribute to society. Such initiatives have increased customers' likelihood to invest in a company. They comply with ethical and social responsibility guidelines. This mitigates the business's legal issues, fines, and penalties risk. It is also essential to ensure the legality of the operation in terms of laws ruling their geography of operation.

Competitive Advantage:

Socially responsible companies differentiate themselves from competitors. They do, making their identity strong in the market. These firms can explore new markets. That usually has a broader, more diverse customer base. Sustainable and ethical products often appeal to conscious consumers.

Cost Savings through Sustainable Practices:

Adoption of Eco-friendly and energy-efficient processes results in minimizing operations costs. Renewable resources and waste reductions help increase the bottom line of business. Valid engagement with a local neighborhood nurtures goodwill. It can create a favorable business environment for the future. It looks better for charity, depending on the local schools and hospitals (Plutus Education, s. f.).

Practical Application of social responsibility at Xplora Tours

Xplora Tours will implement social responsibility practices such as:

- Promote employment and collaboration with local suppliers.
- Promote cultural workshops, environmental education and conservation programs.
- Implement recycling and responsible resource management systems.
- Participate in community reforestation and sustainable development projects.

Market Niche

What is a niche market?

The niche market is a fundamental concept within marketing and business development. In simple terms, a niche market is a specific segment of consumers within a broader market that shares specific common characteristics, needs or interests that are not being fully satisfied by the current offering.

The definition involves identifying a group of people or companies with a particular problem and offering them a customized product or service that solves that problem more effectively than the generalist competition.

Example: while a supermarket chain caters to the general public, a brand dedicated exclusively to gluten-free products, such as Schär or the Celioso chain of bakeries and cafeterias, targets people with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity (Escuela de Negocios de la UEMC, 2015).

Characteristics of a niche market

1. Homogeneity of the target public: The people who make up a niche share common attributes that may be demographic (age, gender, location), economic (purchasing power, consumption habits), psychographic (values, interests) or behavioral (buying habits, brand loyalty).

2. Specific unmet needs: These arise from specific demands that are not fully satisfied by traditional market players.
3. Real willingness to consume: The target audience has an active intention to buy and is willing to pay for products or services that meet their needs.
4. Sufficient size and growth potential: It must be large enough to guarantee profitability and the possibility of expansion.
5. Active demand and reasonable competition: The presence of some competition indicates an established demand and allows identifying opportunities for differentiation.
6. Profitability and ability to specialize: Allows the company to focus resources and offer more effective solutions, which improves operational efficiency and reduces unnecessary costs (Escuela de Negocios de la UEMC, 2015).

Advantages of a niche market

- High segmentation that allows designing products and messages adjusted to the ideal customer.
- Less direct competition and ease of positioning as a benchmark.
- More loyal customers due to the personalization of the service or product.
- Possibility of offering higher prices due to specialization.
- Greater operational efficiency by focusing resources and efforts on specific needs.

Types of market niches

Demographic: Segmentation by age, gender, income level, etc.

Geographic: Based on location of the target audience.

Psychographic: Based on lifestyle, values, interests and attitudes. Behavioral:

Focused on consumer behavior, habits and brand loyalty. Industry: People working in a specific industry or profession.

Technological: Consumers interested in digital solutions or innovative technologies (Escuela de Negocios de la UEMC, 2015).

Xplora Tours` Market Niche

Xplora Tours' market niche is focused on travelers seeking personalized and sustainable experiences, oriented towards ecotourism and cultural tourism, promoting direct contact with local communities and contributing to the development of responsible tourism in the country.

Logo

What is a logo?

In the context of a tour operator, a logo serves as a key element of visual identity that communicates the company's values, purpose, and the experiences it offers to travelers. It helps create trust and recognition among tourists by reflecting the essence of the destinations, culture, and type of tourism the company promotes. For example, a tour operator's logo might incorporate natural elements, colors, or symbols that evoke adventure, relaxation, or cultural richness helping potential customers connect emotionally with the brand before even engaging with its services. As Solis (2018) explains, a logo is "a symbol and image that becomes the identity and face of a company, intended to visually communicate the unique identity of the brand and what it represents.

Xplora Tours Logo

Figure 2

Logo of Xplora Tours



Note: Logo of Xplora Tours. Image created by Segura in Adobe Express (2025).

The word XPLORA is in a dark green tone. This color symbolizes trust, stability, and nature, essential qualities for a tourism company. Green also connects with the natural richness of El Salvador: mountains, lakes, beaches, and forests that are the heart of our tours.

The letter O features a magnifying glass, a symbol of exploration, curiosity, and discovery. Inside it, we see a yellow bus, representing our journeys and the warmth we aim to convey. The yellow color is no coincidence; it symbolizes joy, energy, and optimism, emotions that accompany every experience we offer.

The decorative details around the name reinforce the idea that we are not just a transportation service but a tour operator that pays attention to detail and creates experiences with style and personality. In this way, the logo and colors convey trust, joy, and exploration, three values that define us as a company.

Slogan

What is a slogan?

In the context of a tour operator, a slogan serves as a concise and memorable phrase that communicates the company's core values, promises, and unique travel experiences. It helps establish an emotional connection with tourists by conveying the essence of the destinations, type of tourism, and level of service offered. For example, a tour operator's slogan might highlight adventure, cultural immersion, or eco-friendly travel helping potential customers quickly understand what sets the company apart and what they can expect from their journey. As Wix Blog (n.d.) explains, a slogan is "a short and memorable phrase or sentence that encapsulates a brand's message or values".

Xplora Tours Slogan

Figure 3

Slogan of Xplora Tours



Note: Slogan of Xplora Tours. Image created by Segura in Adobe Express (2025).

At Xplora Tours, we believe that traveling is much more than moving from one place to another. Each journey is an opportunity to discover, to feel, and to transform. Because every step you take, every landscape you admire, every smile you share becomes part of a unique story yours.

“Each” reminds us that there are no small trips or meaningless destinations. Every experience, no matter how simple it may seem, has the power to teach you something, open your eyes, and leave a mark on your heart.

“Journey” is not just a distance measured in kilometers, but an inner path. It’s the emotion of seeing a new place for the first time, listening to a local story, tasting an unfamiliar flavor, feeling the wind of another sunrise, and thinking: *“I’m living something special.”*

“Tells” invites us to give voice to those experiences, to turn moments into memories that last, into stories you’ll share with pride and a sparkle in your eyes, because within every experience lies something that made you feel alive.

And “a story” is that the echo of what you lived. The laughter, the landscapes, the people, the silences. It’s the way your soul keeps what your body once experienced.

At Xplora Tours, we don’t sell travel packages; we create chapters of life. We design moments that become part of your personal story, the kind of stories you later tell with excitement, the ones that remind you the world is full of wonders waiting to be explored.

Because every journey is a blank page, and you are the main character. We simply help you write it with landscapes, adventures, and genuine emotions. “Every journey tells a story” Is not just our slogan; it’s our way of seeing the world.

We want you to dare to live, to discover what lies beyond the map, and to return with your heart full of stories worth telling.

Mission

In the context of a tour operator, the mission defines the company's purpose, goals, and the value it aims to deliver to travelers. It guides decision-making, shapes strategies, and communicates the company's commitment to providing memorable and high quality travel experiences. For example, a tour operator's mission might emphasize promoting sustainable tourism, cultural discovery, or personalized adventures helping customers understand the company's core objectives and the experiences they can expect. As MindTools (n.d.) explains, a mission statement is "a short statement of why an organization exists, what its overall goal is, identifying the goal of its operations".

Mission of Xplora Tours

At Xplora Tours, our mission comes to life in every experience we offer. We are dedicated to showcasing the cultural, natural, and historical richness of El Salvador, not as simple tourist destinations but as living chapters of a story that deserves to be told and experienced. We design tours where every visitor can feel the soul of the country: the warmth of its people, the strength of its nature, and the legacy of its history.

We bring our mission to action by ensuring that every tour is safe, accessible, and responsible, caring for the well-being of our travelers and showing respect toward communities and the environment. We strive to create authentic experiences that strengthen national pride, inspire love for our heritage, and reveal to the world the genuine beauty of El Salvador.

At Xplora Tours, every journey is more than just a trip; it is an opportunity to connect, learn, and create unforgettable memories, the kind that become part of each visitor's personal story. Because we firmly believe that every journey tells a story, and every story begins by exploring our country.

Vision

In the context of a tour operator, the vision describes the company's long-term aspirations and the impact it aims to achieve in the tourism industry. It provides direction for growth, inspires employees, and communicates to customers the company's commitment to innovation, quality, and memorable travel experiences. For example, a tour operator's vision might focus on becoming a leading provider of sustainable tourism in the region or being recognized for exceptional cultural and adventure travel experiences helping customers understand the company's future goals and ambitions. As MindTools (n.d.) explains, a vision statement is "a declaration of an organization's objectives, intended to guide its internal decision-making and inspire its stakeholders".

Xplora Tours' Vision

At Xplora Tours, our vision is to become the leading tour operator in El Salvador, recognized for inspiring tourism that transforms, connects, and leaves a positive impact. We aspire to be a symbol of sustainable, inclusive, and authentic tourism, where every journey contributes to the well-being of local communities and the preservation of our natural environment. We want those who travel with us to discover not only the landscapes of El Salvador but also its identity, spirit, and people. We aim for every experience to awaken pride in Salvadorans and admiration in visitors, showcasing a country that is vibrant, welcoming, and full of life

Our vision guides every step we take: to create routes that tell real stories, generate opportunities for communities, and position Xplora Tours as a brand that not only showcases destinations but also connects hearts and builds a better future through tourism.

Values

At Xplora Tours, our values are the heart of everything we do. We believe in authenticity, showcasing the true cultural and natural essence of El Salvador so that every traveler can feel and live the richness of our land. We strive for quality and excellence, ensuring that every tour is safe, professional, and memorable, creating moments to be cherished forever. Guided by sustainability, we care for our environment and respect local ecosystems, because we know that love for nature is shared from one journey to another.

Innovation drives us to surprise, to create unique experiences that spark emotion and curiosity. We deeply value respect and social responsibility, supporting local communities and building together a kind of tourism that transforms lives. We believe in accessibility, so that everyone, regardless of their background, can discover, feel, and fall in love with El Salvador. These values make every experience with Xplora Tours more than just a trip. It is a story that touches the heart and leaves memories that last forever.

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