



Central America shines at FITUR 2019

The member countries of the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) did not go unnoticed at FITUR 2019, one of the most important tourism events in the world, which closed this year with the record number of 253,000 participants, with an outstanding 11% increase in international participation.

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Last January 23, the doors of FITUR, the International Tourism Trade Fair held annually in Madrid, opened. This is a showcase for tourism professionals, where countless destinations and opportunities are offered for all those who want to travel to other countries, soak up their culture, their traditions, and their cuisine.

Hall #3, entirely dedicated to Latin America, was a celebration full of color, music, smells and Latin flavors, where everyone participated including visitors interested in the region and Ministers of Tourism of the different countries. The fair was inaugurated by the **Monarchs of Spain**, highlighting in this occasion the Dominican Republic as a FITUR partner country.

In this context, Central America opened its pavilion with its traditional opening toast and participated in various events such as the Ibero-American Conference of Tourism Ministers and Entrepreneurs (CIMET), attended by the highest tourism authorities from 13 Ibero-American countries, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.



Over seven hundred ministers, ambassadors, and high-level officials from 62 countries attended the fair, as well as more than 7,500 journalists from 68 countries.

Likewise, thanks to CATA's management, in this important event it was possible to attend more than 60 appointments with wholesalers, media, and other institutions interested in the regional tourism offer.

Spanish journalists and wholesalers recognized by Central America at FITUR 2019



Central America, along with the firm support of the PPT-Guatemala to improve and strengthen marketing channels, carried out the first award ceremony to recognize five Spanish wholesalers that have given greater momentum during 2018 to the promotion and commercialization of the multi-destination in Spain. After an evaluation process with the participation of 40 Central American tour operators, the Spanish wholesalers Catai Tours, Travelplan, Logitravel, Transrutatas, and TUI Spain were selected and recognized.

Similarly, the journalistic work of the authors of two travel stories was acknowledged, that making an approach of the multi-destination product, articulated publications that masterfully captured the cultural, natural, and historical beauty of the region. The awarded authors are Rafael Pola for his article "The best kept secret in Central America" published in the travel guide, El Viajero of the well-known Spanish newspaper, El País, and Berta Jiménez Luesma for his article "This was Paradise" published in Altair magazine.



Central America and the Dominican Republic are promoted at FITUR 2019



The participation of Central America and the Dominican Republic remained in the minds of European tourists, projecting their tourism products in the first international meeting of the tourism sector. Guatemala began with the presentation of “Experiences in the Mayan world”, thus closing the “Heart of the Mayan World” campaign, which promotes throughout this year to **Guatemala** as a tourist destination that combines landscape, tradition, culture, and archeology. The campaign has been featured in taxis, cities, and trains in Las Vegas, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, among others.

Meanwhile, **El Salvador** ventured with Nahuizalco, a place whose characteristics make it an unparalleled destination in the country. It is a town that “woke up from its lethargy” thanks to tourism, and now shines for its indigenous and artisan traditions. Nahuizalco is a “Living Village” that invites tourists to immerse themselves in their traditions through markets and cultural and religious celebrations of the town, which includes ancient folk dances, such as the Dance of the Historians.

Nicaragua presented its new investments, including 20 projects in the field of stimulation of the tourism industry -hotels, restaurants, sports centers-, as well as its opening to new markets, with the launch of new flights from Venezuela and Cuba, and new agreements, both regional and international, where the sum of six projects stands out among the four already executed by China Taiwan in the country.

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Costa Rica, on the other hand, showed its tourist offer with options of sun, beach, nature, bird watching, wellness, and adventure activities, among others. In addition, it featured the presence of the painter and artisan Rolando Alvarado, an expert in the painting of carts, who throughout the day painted with detail and precision a typical wagon wheel that has made Sarchí famous.

This year, **Belize** offered new routes. Due to the increased popularity of the country as a destination in Mexico, in 2019 Aeroméxico becomes the first international airline offering a direct flight service between Mexico and Belize.

The company, Sun Country Airlines, will also open its first nonstop service from Minneapolis/St. Paul to Belize, marking the furthest reach into the American Midwest, a place that can really benefit from easy access to a tropical vacation in Belize during the winter time. In addition, the offer of luxury hotels continues to increase, from the Marriott chain to the eco-hotel designed by Leonardo DiCaprio, which will play an important role in the boom of tourism in the country in the coming years.

Among the 10 best countries to visit in 2019, next to Belize is **Panamá**. This is an important year for the country, especially if we consider that it marks 500 years of the founding of its capital. To celebrate it, historical events will be held that will be combined with the constant development of infrastructure, as well as the attractions proposed for the Panamá Canal.

The **Dominican Republic** opted for golf. It has been recognized as one of the main destinations in 2019, having been awarded - for the fourth time in six years - as the 2019 Best Golf Destination in Latin America and the Caribbean by the IACGTO (the International Association of Golf Tour Operators). It is expected that this recognition will go hand in hand with an increase in the demand for leisure and well-being tourism.

Lastly, **Honduras** was presented as an example of the country's commitment to the tourism industry. Proof of this is its new campaign, with the slogan "You can't leave Honduras without really knowing Honduras," which intends to enhance its attractiveness, beauty, and tourism diversity. As a novelty, the country has managed to merge its MICE offer with its tourism figure: the Mayan Ruins of Copán. This, together with other infrastructure developments such as the Hilton Garden Inn Tegucigalpa, marks the debut of the Honduras brand.



CATA's Pro Tempore President participates in Tourism Innovation Conferences

Both the Guatemalan Minister of Tourism, Jorge Mario Chajón, and CATA's Secretary General, Carolina Briones, gave presentations during the Tourism Innovation Conferences organized by the Spanish Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AECIT).

CATA, represented by its Secretary General, presented the Central America Digital Marketing Strategy to the Spanish professionals, which has become a fundamental link that strengthens the process of tourism integration of the isthmus to promote its offer and attractions in potential and target markets.



Visit Central America app stands out among the three Best Mobile Apps internationally



The Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) and its Central American Promotional and Tourism Guide App, **Visit Central America**, stood out among the three finalists as the best International Tourism App, within the destination guide category, a competition with more than 50 Spanish and international applications.

During the ceremony, Carolina Briones, CATA's Secretary General, accompanied by the developer of the Mobile Application Moreturismo Int., received recognition for the hard work of the Agency towards tourism innovation in the Central American region and the Dominican Republic.

The 6th edition of the "App Tourism Awards" ceremony took place on Thursday, January 24, during the celebration of FITUR 2019. SEGITTUR and FITUR organized the contest with the aim of promoting the union of technology and tourism, rewarding the best tourism applications worldwide.



Petén hosts the LIV CATA Board of Directors' Ordinary Meeting



The Ministers of Tourism of the countries that make up the SICA region, its technical delegates, and the members of the Central America Federation of Chambers of Tourism (FEDECATUR) participated in the LIV CATA Board of Directors' Ordinary Meeting and the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) held in the City of Flores, Petén, in Guatemala.

Both meetings took place on February 22 and 23, 2019, and resulted in important agreements in favor of the development of actions towards the strengthening of tourism in the region.

SICA region's technical expertise gathered for the creation of the PEDTS 2019-2023

Under the strategic direction of the PPT-Guatemala, on February 24, technical experts from the SICA region, together with the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) and the of Central America Tourism Integration Secretariat (SITCA), concluded a working day for the creation of the "2019-2023 Regional Tourism Plan."

The creation of the PEDTS derives in consensual priorities, with lines of action clearly defined for tourism in the Central American region and the Dominican Republic in the next five years.





Central America successfully closes its participation in ITB 2019



The countries of the Central American region and the Dominican Republic promoted their tourism offers within the context of the Internationale Tourismus-Börse Berlin (ITB), which took place from March 6 to 10 in Berlin, Germany.

During the most important tourism fair in Germany, Central America stood out with folkloric dances, gastronomic and coffee tastings, and more than fifty tourism exhibitors, featuring its tourism offer to more than 160,000 visitors and more than 10,000 exhibitors from 181 countries and regions.

The 2019 edition of the ITB included the participation of senior officials from the region, among them being Jorge Mario Chajón, Minister of Tourism of Guatemala; Emilio Silvestri, Minister of Tourism of Honduras; Anasha Campbell, Minister of Tourism of Nicaragua; Amalia Revelo, Minister of Tourism of Costa Rica; Gustavo Him, Minister of Tourism of Panamá; Fausto Hernández, Vice Minister of Tourism of the Dominican Republic; Karen Beavans, Director of Tourism of the Belize Tourism Board; Lya Salazar, Marketing and Fairs Specialist of the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador; and, Carolina Briones, CATA's Secretary General.

Among other activities, these officials, represented by the Pro Tempore Presidency of Guatemala and CATA, hosted the traditional opening toast in the Central American pavilion and held important appointments with wholesalers, media, and other institutions interested in the regional tourism offer.

For the first time, Central America gives awards to German journalist and wholesalers



During the 2019 ITB in Berlin, the leading trade fair for the world tourism industry, the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA), represented by the PPT-Guatemala, for the first time gave an award to two of the German wholesale companies that currently operate the Central American multi-destination in said nation. Both wholesalers, TRAVEL TO NATURE and AVENTOURA, were recognized by Central American tour operators in appreciation of the momentum that both have given during 2018 to the promotion and commercialization of the Central American multi-destination in Germany.

Likewise, Britta Matzen was recognized for authoring the article "Paradiesische Vielfalt" ("Paradise Diversity"), who with a multi-destination product approach, masterfully captured the cultural, natural, and historical beauty of the region.



Central America launches the first phase of its

2019 !influencers campaign

With the purpose of reinforcing the image of Central America and positioning it as a tourist multi-destination in the target markets, the Central American Tourism Agency (CATA), launched the first phase of its campaign of vloggers from Spain, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The multi-destination trip of these European influencers was dotted with spectacular places full of natural and historical beauty, visiting during the month of March the tourism product of the Dominican Republic, Panamá, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua.

This trip becomes a historical event for the Central American region because, for the first time, the Dominican Republic joins Central America's promotion and marketing campaigns as an integrating country that shares many similarities with the countries of the region, and it also enriches the tourism integration process.

With this campaign, the influencers Road to Wild, We Travel the World and Lost Found Keep, through the strategic vision of Central America have generated valuable content by inviting the European tourist, through their accounts, to visit Central America and enjoy more than one tourist destination of the region.





El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua host Spanish journalists



With the arrival of journalists from Spain, Central America began its press travel schedule for 2019. The first trip, comprised of four Spanish journalists, started on March 2 with an itinerary that was developed by the tourism product of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

This group was composed of important journalists from Spain such as Fátima Ruiz, from Diario el Mundo; Marcos Cifo, from the magazine Más Viajes; Julio Castro, from Diario La Razón; and Rafael Pola, freelance from El País Newspaper,

who stands out for having been offered and award by the Guatemala Pro Tempore Presidency for the publication of its travel article "The best kept secret in Central America."

It should be noted that during this press trip, the Minister of Honduras, Emilio Silvestri, personally accompanied the welcoming of the group, and in a symbolic act gave the journalist Rafael Pola a plaque of recognition for his travel article, which highlights tourist destinations such as Cayos Cochinos and Pico Bonito in Honduras.

Journalists from the United Kingdom complete their multi-destination trip through El Salvador and Honduras

El Salvador and Honduras hosted an important group of journalists from the United Kingdom, including Russell Maddicks of Latino Life, Mark Jackson of Travel Begins at 40 and TNT Magazine (UK) tntmagazine.com, Neil Gerarthy of The Scotsman, and John Paul Thompson of The Sunday World.

The journalists' multi-destination trip started in El Salvador, visiting spectacular places such as the Iamatepec volcano, the picturesque Suchitoto, and the traditional Route of the Flowers, completing their multi-destination experience with the tourist product of Honduras, where they toured Roatán, La Ceiba, and Punta Gorda, among others. The finishing touch for this trip was placed by the Minister of Tourism of Honduras, Emilio Silvestri, who welcomed the group in person.





The Dominican Republic and Costa Rica present their tourism offer to Italian journalists

The month of May was key to the promotion and marketing of the cultural, natural, and patrimonial wealth, and the authenticity and warmth of the Central American region and the tourism product of the Dominican Republic.

Italian journalists closed the first phase of the press trips in 2019, which will be complemented by a second phase that will start in September of this year. The journalists Isabella Grassano of the newspaper I Viaggi di Repubblica, and Elena Barassi of the monthly magazine GQ, toured emblematic destinations of the Dominican Republic such as its impressive Colonial City and Catalina Island, among others, adding experiences with the tour of the Caribbean Costa Rica, and the visit to one of the most numerous ethnic groups of Costa Rica, the Bribrí indigenous community.



English journalist highlights the beauty of El Salvador

As a result of the press trips organized by the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) in March this year, the article “Top 10 Must-Dos in Surprising El Salvador” written by the British journalist Russell Maddicks was published in the magazine LatinoLife. Maddicks made his multi-destination trip through El Salvador and Honduras. Following, we share an extract of his article:

“Affectionately known as El Pulgarcito de America (the Tom Thumb of the Americas), El Salvador may be the smallest country in Central America, but it is packed with authentic experiences.

From mysterious Mayan ruins, to sleepy colonial towns painted in pastel shades, cloud-forest coffee haciendas producing premium beans, and isolated Pacific beaches offering some of the best surf in the Americas, El Salvador surprises at every turn.

Foodies should head there for the stuffed-corn pupusas alone.”



CATA Secretary General participates in the X Cooperation Forum organized by MITUR El Salvador



During the X Cooperation Forum called “The role of cooperation in technical vocational education and job creation for the development of sustainable tourism in El Salvador,” organized by the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador (MITUR), CATA’s Secretary General, Carolina Briones, presented the model of the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) for the promotion of the multi-destination.

Thanks to the invitation of the Minister of Tourism of El Salvador, Napoleón Duarte, the work of CATA reached more than 250 participants, including actors from the academic sector, micro and small entrepreneurs (MIPYMES), the Rural Community Tourism National Panel -MNTRC -, tourism-related NGOs and CDTs, representatives of cooperating agencies and international foundations, ambassadors, and cultural, environmental, and commercial attachés of other nations, MITUR-CORSATUR-ISTU officials, ministers, deputy ministers and relevant public officials.

CATA’s Business Model and its Digital Marketing Strategy is shared in Paraguay

The City of Hernandarias in Paraguay hosted the First Congress of Tourist Municipalities of Paraguay during which Carolina Briones, Secretary General of the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA), shared CATA’s business model and the implementation of the Central American Digital Marketing Strategy.

CATA and its Digital Strategy had a very important reception before Mayors, Governors, national-level Directors of Tourism, Ambassadors of 14 invited countries, authorities of the national tourism system and radio, written and televised press, among others.





CATA's Secretary General participates in El Salvador's National Tourism Forum



Carolina Briones, Secretary General of the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA), participated as a panelist in the Conversation "Panorama 2030: challenges and perspectives of Salvadoran tourism" within the context of the El Salvador's National Tourism Forum. This space is intended to strengthen the positioning of tourism among the different actors of the national and international tourism sector as a priority and strategic lever that drives the sustainable development of El Salvador.



The Forum gathered more than 300 actors from the tourism sector of El Salvador, with panelists of notable experience within the sector.





The 2019 Central America Travel Market Fair (CATM) will turn Guatemala into the heart of the region for tourism

Convinced that Central America is an experience that must be lived, and with the purpose of promoting the isthmus as a multi-destination worldwide, the Central American governments and the regional private sector, along with the technical assistance of the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA), will host the 2019 Central America Travel Market (CATM) international tourism fair, which takes place every two years. CATM will be held on June 4 and 5, 2019 in the magical Guatemala.

Due to its nature and specialization in long-haul travel offers, CATM is a major tourism event, offering local entrepreneurs the opportunity to present and negotiate their multi-destination offers. At the same time, CATM provides the facilities to take care of this type of traveler to wholesale companies in the world that attend the fair in search of innovative and holiday alternatives for their markets, and to establish and strengthen their business connections with Central America.

Central America thanks and recognizes the work and dedication of the 2019 CATM Organizing Committee, led by the Guatemalan Tourism Institute (INGUAT) and the Chamber of Tourism of Guatemala (CAMTUR). Thanks to their effort, everything is ready to welcome international media, wholesalers, and regional entrepreneurs. Likewise, we must highlight the work carried out by CATA in coordination with its Public Relations office in Europe, resulting in the attendance of important media and European marketers.

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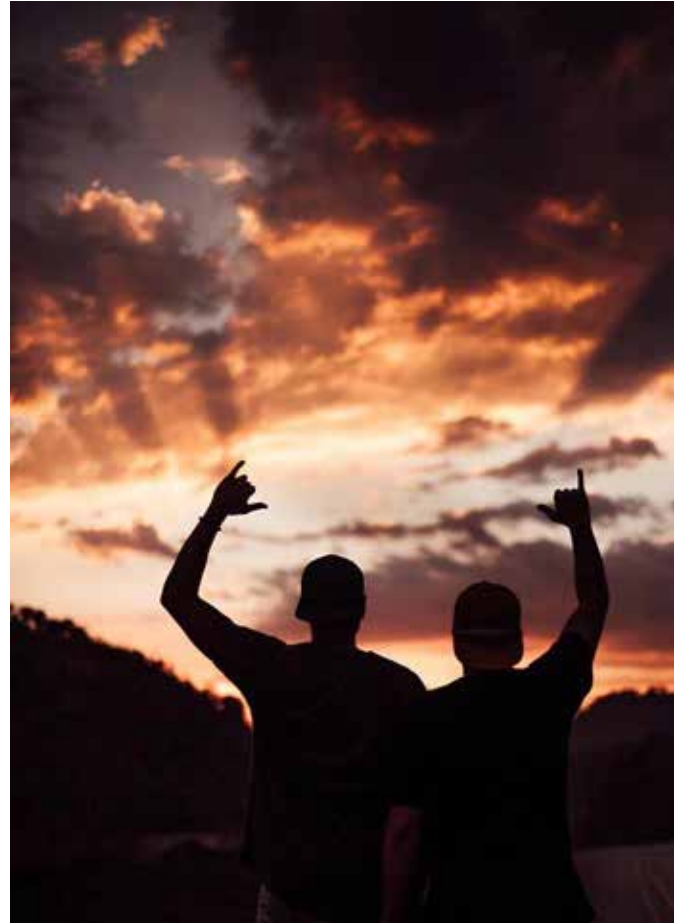
CATM opens a range of crucial opportunities to strengthen the positioning of the region as a tourism multi-destination and to occupy important spaces in different news media in order to project it as a multicolored territory, full of shades, flavors, aromas, and accents; an incredible world overflowing with spectacular landscapes, warm and endless coasts of white sand in the Caribbean and dark sand in its Pacific coast,

in which the cultural richness and affection of our people are reflected.

Guatemala, in addition to being recognized as the Heart of the Mayan World, will also become the heart of the region for tourism, where great marketers and specialized media in the tourism industry will converge.

Campaign of
!nfluencers
for Central America
moves forward with
strength in its first
stage



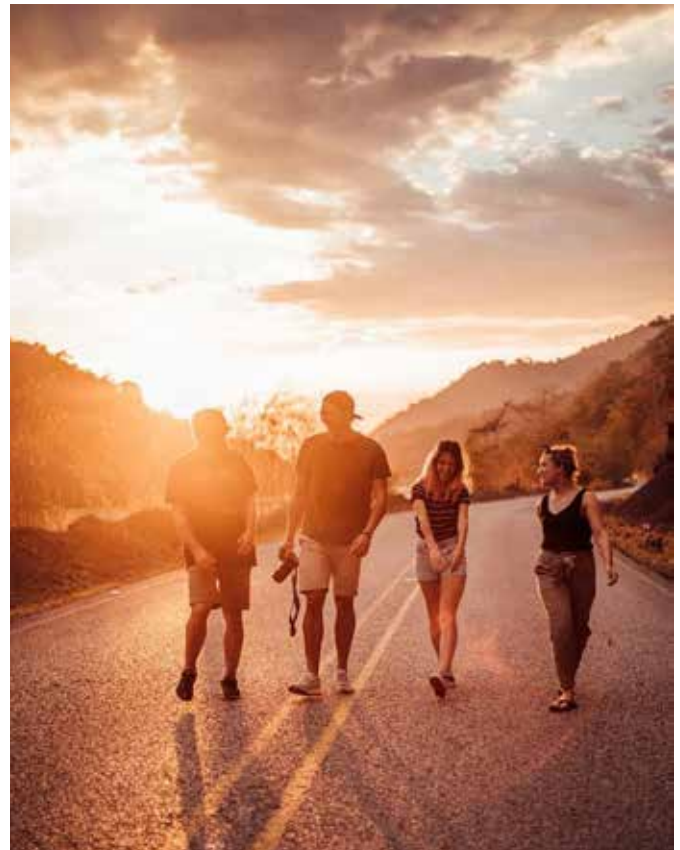


During the first stage of implementation of the 2019 influencers campaign, promoted and articulated by the Central America Tourism Agency (CATA) with the support of the National Tourism Administrations of the region, Central America has been featured through video blog accounts such as We Travel the World, Lost Found Keep, Road to Wild, We are Travelers, Marco and Felicity and François with photographs, videos, and posts from the Central American region and the Dominican Republic.

To date, the influencers campaign has generated **83 publications**, achieved a reach of **more than 753,84**, with **941,67 views** and more than **1,200 comments** for an

EMV de 194,213.25.

During May, this campaign will be complemented with the second group of influencers that will be touring Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.





Central America strongly positioned with the implementation of its digital strategy



Only seven months after having launched the implementation of the digital marketing and promotion strategy of Central America, exceptional results have been achieved, meeting the proposed goals by leaps and bounds. Consequently, to date, the proposed objectives show the following metrics: **85% advance on Facebook, 99% on Instagram, 65% on twitter, and 98% on YouTube.**

The scope of this campaign has allowed Central America to position itself in its target markets and other markets through its innovative web page that currently has **more than 276**

thousand users and more than half a million pages visited. Likewise, Facebook has achieved a reach of **22.6 million**, with **113,780 fans and more than 474 thousand interactions**; on Instagram the total reach is **16 million people**, with **more than 429 thousand interactions and more than eight thousand followers.** For its part, Twitter has **more than 281 thousand impressions and more than seven thousand followers**, and YouTube to date reports a total of **1,141 million impressions and more than 193 thousand views**, adding to this number **more than 736 thousand reproductions on Facebook.**



www.catatourismagency.org • www.visitcentroamerica.com

Central America Tourism Agency - CATA

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