

Biking Nicaragua and Costa Rica 2019

Day 0, Friday, April 19, 2019

I cycled to Walmart, Kelley point and then to Next adventure. At next adventure I bought a new duffle bag and went home and repacked for my trip using the new duffle bag. I left my house around 8:30 PM and Marty dropped me off at the airport. My flight left for Atlanta at about 11:15 PM and I slept for most of the 4.5-hour flight. (Pre trip Daily bike miles = 38.4 miles)

Day 1, Saturday, April 20, 2019

My flight landed in Atlanta a little after 6:00 AM EST. I walked around the airport and boarded my flight for Managua around 10:00 AM. The flight departed Atlanta at about 11:00 AM and arrived in Managua a little before 1:00 PM. I took a taxi to the bus station and quickly caught a bus to Rivas, Nicaragua. I then took a taxi to my hotel and was there by about 4:00 PM. I assembled my bike and cycled to San Jorge. I went to the beach, looked at Lake Nicaragua and could barely see Volcano Concepcion on Ometepe Island. There were several people on the beach and very poor air quality (This is why I could barely see the Volcano – it is close to San Jorge). I cycled back to my hotel, assembled my suitcase trailer and did stuff around the hotel. I went to sleep a little after 11:00 PM. (Daily bike miles = 9.55 miles; trip bike miles = 9.55 miles)

Day 2, Sunday, April 21, 2019

I left the hotel around 7:50 AM and was at the Costa Rica border by about 11:30 AM. I paid a lot to get expressed out of Nicaragua, from what I could see the lines were not bad to leave Nicaragua. I decided not to pay the extra to get expressed through the Costa Rica customs (I think I could have, someone offered express services when I was still on the Nicaragua side of customs). The Costa Rica immigration line was very long; I should have tried to pay express services to get me through the border. Some people were going a different way to cross the border, but it seemed like I was going to the correct line, so I got in the line, I did not get to Costa Rica with my stamped passport until about 4:50 PM. I do not think there was a shorter way to walk into Costa Rica. I think there might have been buses that might speed up the process, but probably from Managua. Well, I cycled to La Cruz and did not get there until after sunset. I found hotels, but they did not look that great. I selected a hotel and it was fine. (Daily bike miles = 35.13 miles; trip bike miles = 44.68 miles)

Day 3, Monday, April 22, 2019

I woke up around 7:00 AM and was leaving the hotel at 8:00 AM. As I was checking out the man working at the hotel told me breakfast was included, so I stayed for breakfast. By the time I left La Cruz it was about 9:00 AM. The ride to Liberia was

unpleasant. The road was in great shape for cars, but only a 12-inch shoulder (including the white line – it would have been better without the trailer) and lots of traffic. There was a lot of side winds and some large gusts of winds. Luckily, the winds were blowing me towards off the road. I was blown off the road into the dirt shoulder 4 times. At one point, a touring cyclist passed me. He never slowed down and did not stop to compare tales. I never saw him again. I arrived in Libera around 2:00 PM and tried finding a hotel. I found a Best Western and the price was OK, so I agreed and asked if I could park my bike inside or on the grounds. They said no, so I had to try a different hotel. I found a great hotel for me and they let me bring my bike to the gated parking area near my room. They did not instruct me on where to put my bike, so I put the bike in my room. Then I rented a car using orbitz.com. Next, I cycled to the airport to pick up the car. I picked up my rental car and then I need a plan. I spent time on-line trying to figure out where I would go the next day; by the time I went to sleep, I was still not positive of what I would do for the remainder of my vacation. (End of journey miles 87.7 miles. (At Budget car rental), Daily bike miles = 49.45 miles; trip bike miles = 94.13 miles)

Day 4, Tuesday, April 23, 2019

I woke around 7:00 AM and cycled for about two hours. Then I went back to my hotel to try planning my day, I decided to try to find a hotel near Manuel Antonio. The internet was not working well and I could not find something that was on both Orbitz and findable with the car GPS. I finally gave up and started driving a little after 11:00 AM. The drive was horrible, tons of traffic, lots of road construction and only one lane on each side of the highway. I arrived in Quepos around 4:00 PM and looked for a good hotel in town. The traffic and roads were packed I could not find a hotel that looked secure for my car. I then started driving to Manuel Antonio and there were a lot of hotels, mostly they did not look like they had secure parking. I found a place that looked very secure, it was expensive and I decided to take the room. I had to follow the guy up a hill and the walk to the room was not great. The room had a great private view, kitchen and a lot of stuff I did not need. I then cycled the rest of the way to Manuel Antonio and found a lot better hotel options. Then I cycled back to see if I could cancel my room and they let me. They were unhappy, but agreed to return my money and charge me nothing. I felt bad so I gave the guy a \$20 USD tip. Then I went to the other hotel I had found, to me it was much better and half the price. It was right next to the national park, a nice beach and a great area to pick up souvenirs. I walked the beach and to the park entrance. I did see a few monkeys. That night I reserved a hotel room for two nights in Monteverde. (Daily bike miles = 21.73 miles; trip bike miles = 115.86 miles; Car miles 170.8 miles – includes miles from 4/22/19)

Day 5, Wednesday, April 24, 2019

I did not sleep great, I kept getting misquotes byte. It did not make since, I put on

quite a bit of deet bug spray before I went to sleep. I finally got out of bed after lots of attempts to go back to sleep at 5:55 AM. Then I got ready to hike and walked over the Manuel Antonio Park when it opened at 7:00 AM. I signed up for a guided 2-hour tour, like last time (in 2011) the guide was great finding things with his eyes and then zooming in on the animals with his telescope. I normally could not find the animals with my eyes. He also was able to get great photos through his scope on cell phones and he would try with my camera, but the photos taking with the smart phones were much better. I need to get a better smart phone. The guide went back and let us stay at the beach to work our way back on our own. He said we could stay until 4:00 PM. I hiked the trail around the peninsula. Then I hiked to the other beach behind the souvenir shop. I ended up getting my best photos on that last hike. Then I needed to hurry back to my hotel, so I could check out by noon. I got back to the hotel and quickly loaded my car. I was checked out of the hotel by 11:45 AM. Then I started the long drive to Monteverde. I stopped to get gas and went in the store to get stuff. Then I returned to my car, leaned on the car and it moved, wow I need to remember to either put the car in gear or set the park brake. I have been driving an automatic car for a long time! As I was driving to Monteverde I kept feeling like I made a big mistake wanting to go there. The travel book I had said they only allowed 160 people a day in the park and when I tried making reservation on the internet, I kept coming up with nothing available. When I arrived at the location my GPS thought was my hotel, it was not there. I asked at the hotel my GPS led me to and they found my hotel on the internet and showed me the map from where we were to where I needed to go (it was about a mile away) and I was then able to find my reserved hotel room. At the hotel I asked about the rain forest and they said this time of year you do not need reservation. I drove to the park and found it was closed, but displayed its hours. It said 7:00 AM (my guidebook says it opens at 10:30 AM) to 4:00 PM. There is a lodge there that had a reception desk. I asked the person about the park at the reception desk and he told me no reservation are required and I could get a 2-hour guided tour if I show up at 7:30 AM the next day. I went back to town and bought food and then back to my hotel. The hotel is a long way from town, nice for me. No air conditioner, no shoes allowed on in room, leaky toilet, shower door was half gone, otherwise very nice with a great view from my porch. (Daily bike miles = 0 miles; trip bike miles = 115.86 miles; Car miles 128.6 miles)

Day 6, Thursday, April 25, 2019

When I got breakfast in the morning I had to wait for the people before me to order before I could order, they only had one set of menus. I order the Spanish breakfast (with beans a rice) and they gave me the American breakfast (Bacon and French fries). Then I drove to Monteverde cloud forest and paid to enter the park. I hiked most of the trails and a lady that was looking at an eagle (see said it was a very rare bird, I could not see it) told me about the Quetzal in the park. She told me where to go

to look for the special birds (they have manmade nest for Quetzal in the park). I walked all the trail, at one point I almost got run over by a tarantula and at another part of the trail a coati ran down the trail past 2 hikers, then me and then a guy with a telescope came over a hill asking if a coati just ran down the trail (The animal was only about 6 to 12 inches from me as it ran down the center of the trail). Then I went looking for the Quetzal nest, I had trouble finding it, then I found it by some women that had been watching the nest (I walked by them at that spot about 20 minutes earlier and did not notice the nest that time). The women continued watching the nest for another 10 minutes and then they left. Me and another man waited a few more minutes at the nest and then the Quetzal showed up in the tree right over my head. I took several photos, but my camera was not focusing and I only got a couple of fair photos. I need a better camera, this one is good and new, but often for no reason will not focus. I left the park a little after 3:00 PM (it closes at 4:00 PM) and started heading back to my hotel. I missed my hotel on the drive back, got more food in town and then returned to my hotel. I had a tuna sandwich, chips, peach soda, ice cream and Oreos for my 60 th birthday dinner feast. (Daily bike miles = 0 miles; trip bike miles = 115.86 miles; Car miles 6.8 miles)

Day 7, Friday, April 26, 2019

I woke up around 6:30 AM and had my included breakfast, then I slowly got ready to leave the hotel. I walked around the grounds of the hotel and found this trail where I saw cool birds and spider monkeys. I wish I would have found the trail sooner. I left the hotel at around 8:30 AM, I was hoping to find something to do on the way to Liberia. I stopped at the information center for the Children's Eternal Rain Forest and asked about what to see on my way back to Liberia. The lady gave me details and told me how to get to the main visitor center at the Children's Eternal Rain Forest, but she warned me to never leave luggage in my car in Costa Rica. I had also read this on the internet, I decided not to stop places on the way to Liberia. Then main concern in my car was the bike. When I arrived in Bagaces I noticed a bike lane near the highway. I went into town and found a place that looked safe to park my car. I took out my bike and made sure nothing looked like it was hiding, mostly all that could be seen looking in the windows was food, water and a bag of trash (which was actually cloths). I then bike around the town area, back by my car and then out to the highway. In total, I biked about 20 miles. On my GPS it looked like a river front park in town, when I went there all I saw was a trickle of water in a stream in a very poor neighborhood. I was very close to Palo Verde National Park and not far from Liberia. I did not want to leave my stuff in the car so I drove to Liberia and checked into my hotel before going to Palo Verde National Park. I arrived at the park at about 3:55 PM and they would not let me enter the park, it was closing at 4:00 PM. Then I drove back to my hotel in Liberia and walked around town and bought some souvenirs. I packed up for my

departure and went to sleep at about 10:00 PM. (Daily bike miles = 20.54 miles; trip bike miles = 136.4 miles; Car miles 88.9 miles)

Day 8, Saturday, April 27, 2019

I woke up at 4:55 AM and started biking at 5:20 AM. I cycled toward Bagaces until I reached the no cycling sign on the Pan American highway. Then I cycled back and a little around town. Then I had the hotel-included breakfast at about 6:40 AM. Then I went back to my room and quickly got ready for hiking. At a little after 7:00 AM I started driving to Rincón de la Vieja National Park. I arrived in the parking lot slightly past 8:00 AM. When I paid my entrance fee I was told I was guest 4 for the day. I then hiked the loop trail at Rincón de la Vieja National Park that had bubbling mud, steam fumes holes and bubbling pools. I did see one monkey on the hike. I drove back to Liberia and arrived in town by about 11:30 AM and bought a wood bird and then went back to my hotel. I cycled a short distance and then went back to my room. I packed my bike, took a shower, packed all my other stuff, checked out of the hotel, filled my rental car with gas, returned the rental car and took the rental agency shuttle to the airport. I checked in for my flight and at first, they only checked my bags to LAX. I asked if they could check the bags all the way to Portland and they did. Good thing they charged me 70 USD for the bags and I might have had to pay that again if I would have had to recheck them in LAX. In addition, I would have needed to carry my bags around at LAX. They were not able to assign my seat for my flight when I checked in and I had to get my seat assignments at the gate. I asked them for a window or aisle and all they had was the exit row. They ended up assigning me the exit row window, great seat extra leg room, but seat does not recline. Once at LAX, I went through customs and rechecked my luggage at the international terminal. Then I went to get my boarding passes at the domestic terminal. Then gave me center seats, I do not think I had a choice. The Delta person just did the self-check in for me and handed me the boarding passes. Then I tried to get through security and into the domestic terminal, but they said I could not go to the terminal until the morning. They close the terminal at night and my flight was at 7:05 AM the next day. I ended up walking to another terminal and sleeping on a bench in the baggage claim area for southwest airlines. (Daily bike miles = 17.71 miles; trip bike miles = 154.11 miles; Car miles 39.1 miles)

Day 9, Sunday, April 28, 2019

I did not sleep great, about 5 hours of bad sleep. Then I went to the rest room and was able to go through security to the domestic terminal gate to wait for the flight to Salt Lake City. The flight went fine and the layover was short. Then I caught my flight to Portland and everything was on time and I was in Portland slightly after noon. Then I took the max home, Marty was gone on my bike, so I texted her and meet up with her at her work. Then we biked to next adventure, bought backpacks, ate dinner at

Montage, cycled over the Tillicum Bridge, then back over Hawthorn Bridge and then cycled back to my place. We went to sleep around 11:00 PM. (Post trip Daily bike miles = 17.75 miles, not included in trip miles)