



A five-star **boutique** hotel in Guatemala delivers a **refreshing** approach to eco-tourism, inspired by its surroundings while also protecting them

IN PERFECT HARMONY



Extending down to the banks of the stunning Lake Atitlán and accessible only by water taxi, Laguna Lodge Eco-Resort & Nature Reserve is a bewitching hideaway in the Central American country of Guatemala. Designed to maintain the beauty of its surroundings as well as benefiting from them, this celebrated resort encompasses everything from fine dining to a spa inspired by natural treatments, all overseen by charming and helpful staff drawn from neighbouring villages.

Nature The beautiful Laguna Lodge stands within its own private 100-acre nature reserve, and enjoys a temperate local climate that brings warm days and cool nights all year round. Deference to its surroundings permeates every aspect of this environmentally aware resort; it supports the local Mayan community, generates its own renewable energy through solar panels and naturally fallen wood is used for heating in the solid-fuel fireplaces. Rainwater is collected for drinking, and many of the raw ingredients in the award-winning Zotz restaurant are grown organically onsite. Serving imaginative vegetarian cuisine, the chefs at this lakefront restaurant are able to draw from dairy, fruits and vegetables either grown in the extensive grounds or sourced from local farmers, creating gastronomic delights with minimal environmental impact.

The comfortable soft furnishings in each suite at Laguna Lodge are also indigenous and eco-friendly. Fabrics hand-woven by Mayan weavers and recycled

glass/stoneware are among the more obvious examples of a dedication to sustainability that is evident in every unbleached towel and natural cleaning agent. Even the wines and chocolates in each minibar are all organic, with delightfully fresh ingredients used for cocktails in the resort's atmospheric and welcoming Lava Bar.

Ambience Yet it would be wrong to assume that this dedication to environmental friendliness in any way diminishes the calibre of Laguna Lodge's accommodation. In fact, it adds to the atmosphere and character, with adobe walls and woven textiles contributing to a tactile and luxurious ambience. Each expansive suite has bespoke furnishings, with hand-carved wooden beds and hand-painted sinks among many examples of quality Guatemalan craftsmanship. Sliding glass doors lead out onto patios affording fine views of this magical setting, where three volcanoes form a dramatic backdrop to one of the world's most beautiful lakes. Indeed, this environment lends itself perfectly to outdoor activities, while the Hummingbird spa features a hot-water rock pool and numerous beauty treatments inspired by Laguna Lodge's enchanting surroundings.

Offering stylish lakeside accommodation and an ecologically sound ethos, it's easy for guests to see why Time magazine says that Laguna Lodge is 'pure Maya magic'.

www.thelagunalodge.com