



COLONIAL MEXICO

10 days from £1399

Mexico City – San Miguel de Allende – Guanajuato – Morelia – Mexico City

Daily Itinerary

Day 1 (Thursday) LONDON – MEXICO CITY

Depart on scheduled flight to Mexico City. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

Day 2 (Friday) MEXICO CITY

Free time for a walk around the city to acquaint yourself with that area of one of world's largest cities. Or you can just simply relax at your hotel before your Mexican adventure begins the next day.

Day 3 (Saturday) MEXICO CITY

Start the day with a drive towards the huge city's southern suburbs, soon reaching the colonial district of Coyoacán. Magnificent residences group around the 16th Century Franciscan cloister of the Saint John the Baptist church, where social life unfolds, enriched by cafés, bars, bookstores and museums, constituting a centre of attraction for Mexican and foreign visitors alike.

Our next stop will be the fabled Casa Azul, the Blue House that was Frida Kahlo's home, intermittently, from her birth to her death. It was here that she lived with her muralist husband Diego Rivera and also here where they hosted Bolshevik leader Trotsky and his wife. The

House, of course, is now a remarkable museum, or perhaps we should say it is a real pilgrimage shrine for Frida's innumerable, worldwide fans. Proceed to Coyoacán's famous Mercado, a typical Mexican market that is a true feast to the senses.

On to the neighbouring colonial suburb of San Angel, with its cobble-stoned streets and stately mansions, where we can stroll around picturesque Plaza San Jacinto, with free time to enjoy a spree through the colourful Saturday Bazaar. Built around a courtyard, the bazaar features the work of some of Mexico's finest artisans in silver, enamel, pottery, glass and textiles. At the Bazar del Sábado you can enjoy shopping for Mexican paintings, sculptures, and excellent quality handicrafts. Outside, on the plaza, tour members will enjoy a permanent art exhibition and a colourful bustle of vendors, artisans, and artists. Those with a good eye for art have a unique opportunity to find excellent samples of contemporary Mexican painting.

Free time for a restoring midday bite.

We now drive further south, to the unique floating gardens of Xochimilco, where we embark in a typical trajinera, starting a canal-ride with accompaniment of a Mariachi band sailing alongside, watching Mexican families enjoy their favourite weekend pastime. On our way back, a stop is made at University City, the largest institute of high learning in the Continent, with many interesting buildings, such as the Central Library, completely covered with murals by Juan



O'Gorman, executed in natural stone mosaics. The adjoining Olympic Stadium is decorated with a bas-relief mural by Diego Rivera, and many other artists have left their mark in this showcase of modern Mexican architecture. Return to hotel, with remainder of the day free.

Day 4 (Sunday) MEXICO CITY

A comprehensive tour will acquaint us with the multiple aspects of this many-sided town, once the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, today one of the world's great metropolises. Start with a visit to the immense central square, Zócalo, flanked by the baroque Metropolitan Cathedral, by National Palace –where the history of the country has been depicted on Diego Rivera's famous murals- which is the seat of the Mexican Government, and by the archaeological vestiges of the old Aztec city's Templo Mayor. Our journey continues through the splendidly colonial Centro Histórico, in the process of full restoration, past Santo Domingo Square with the old Inquisition Palace, and such architectural jewels as the unique House of Tiles, the Palace of Emperor Iturbide and the Venetian-inspired Central Post Office. Continue to the white-marble Palace of Fine Arts, where invaluable works of art of Mexico's most prominent painters are in exhibition, and on to Chapultepec Park, for a visit to one of the world's best and most extraordinary museums, the Museo Nacional de Antropología, with its rich collections of pre-Columbian art.



These include the impressive Sun Stone, better known as the Aztec Calendar, as well as the stone sculpture of the gruesome goddess of Earth and Death, Coatlicue, the snake-skirted one. A massive, 168-ton monolith of Aztec rain god Tláloc zealously guards the museum's entrance, while keeping an eye on the always heavy traffic of the stately Paseo de la Reforma, the city's proud landmark. Return to hotel to enjoy a free afternoon and evening.

Day 5 (Monday) MEXICO CITY/ QUERETARO/SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE

Departure to Queretaro. Visit of the city that has an important crossroad in Mexico history and played a leading role in the struggle for independence. Afterwards on to San Miguel de Allende, the home of countless artists and artisans from all over the world. Within its typical colonial outline, the peculiar parochial church stands out for its narrow towers, built in a self-styled neo-gothic. Overnight at Mesón de los Poetas (3*) or similar.



Day 6 (Tuesday) SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE/GUANAJUATO

After breakfast leave to Guanajuato probably Mexico's most beautiful town, where the first battles of Independence War were fought. Upon arrival drive through a unique colonial, subterranean freeway, and start visits with historical Alhóndiga Fortress, the Basilica of our Lady of Guanajuato, San Roque Square, and past the birth-house of Diego Rivera, Mexico's famous muralist. On to Teatro Juárez with its strange architectural mixture of *art nouveau* with Moorish and Hellenic styles. We drive up to the Pipila Monument for a breathtaking view of the city and, last but not least, we drive, to the Municipal Cemetery for a look at the gruesome "Guanajuato Mummies". Continue in the afternoon with a visit to La Valenciana Church, close to the entrance of a gold mine once considered the world's richest, still being exploited to the present day. The richness of the mine is reflected in the exuberant magnificence of La Valenciana's gilded altarpieces. Overnight at Best Western Monteverde (3*) or similar.



Day 7 (Wednesday) GUANAJUATO/PATZCUARO/MORELIA

Leave to Patzcuaro. Upon arrival a short walking tour of this busy and charming highlands town of cobble-stoned streets and red-tiled roofs, in the heartland of the *Purépecha* country. A drive to El Estribo lookout point will afford you a magnificent vista of Lake Pátzcuaro and its islands. Continue to Morelia. Built in the 16th century, the city is an outstanding example of urban planning which combines the ideas of Spanish architecture with the Mesoamerican experience. Morelia was the birthplace of some of the most important personalities of independent Mexico and has played a major role in the country's history. Visit Government Palace, which formerly housed a religious seminary and is noted for the severe elegance of its colonial architecture, as well as for the remarkable murals of native Michoacán painter Alfredo Zalce; the austere pink sandstone Cathedral, and the State Museum, with its great collection of Tarascan archaeological pieces. Overnight at De la Soledad (4*) or similar.



Day 8 (Thursday) MORELIA/MEXICO CITY

Visit of Morelia, known as the aristocrat of the Colonial cities. Fine sculpture Churches, a colourful plaza and numerous arcades will be worth this visit. After the visit, drive to Mexico City. Drop off at your selected hotel.

Day 9 (Friday) MEXICO CITY

Free time until your transfer to Mexico City Airport for your flight to the UK.

Day 10 (Saturday) LONDON

Arrive back in the UK.

NB. Programme details may be subject to change according to local conditions.

Prices from £1399 per person sharing twin/double room.

Additional nights available on request. Please contact us for prices.

Prices include:

- Return scheduled flights in economy class
- Airport taxes and charges are current prices
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure in Mexico
- 8 nights accommodation at selected hotel with daily breakfast
- All tours and excursions as described in the daily itinerary
- Transportation by air conditioned vehicle during the itinerary
- English speaking guide during the tours and excursions
- Entrance fees as applicable

Not included:

- Lunches or dinners
- Tips to guide, driver, or driver-guide.
- Beverages and extras, such as laundry and telephone calls.

Flight Options :

If you prefer you can obtain your own flights and just take our tour – please contact us for prices.

Booking

Contact us to reserve a place and then download our booking form and forward to us with your deposit.

Contact details

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