



MAYAN HERITAGE

11 days from £ 1295

Mexico City – Merida – Uxmal – Chichen-Itzá - Cancun

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. Last overnight in Mexico City.

Day 5 (Monday) TEOTIHUACAN

Morning drive to the Basilica de Guadalupe, the holiest shrine for millions of Mexicans. From here, proceed to San Juan Teotihuacan, a city that flourished several centuries prior to the arrival of the Aztecs; it was probably the largest of Mexico's ancient cities, the capital of a great and powerful empire. Inspect the awe-inspiring pyramids of the Sun and Moon and walk down the Road of the Dead to the Citadel, wonder at the unique Temple of Quetzalcóatl, with its stone-sculptured plumed-serpent heads, and the masks of rain god Tlaloc. Return to Mexico City by lunchtime. In the afternoon, transfer to airport for a flight to Merida, *the White City*, capital of Yucatan, where you are transferred to a centrally located hotel, your home for tonight. Free time to roam through this friendly city.



Day 6 (Tuesday) UXMAL and KABAH

Morning drive through the Yucatan Peninsula's flatlands and over its only -300 m.-high- Puuc *mountain chain*, first stopping at the archaeological site of Kabah, with a visit to its amazing Palace of the Masks, covered with nearly 300 masks of rain god Chac. We then continue to the fascinating ruins of UXMAL, to experience the classical Mayan architecture at its best. The Magician's Pyramid, the Governor Palace and the magnificent Nunnery Quadrangle, with its perfect geometrical, allegorical bas-reliefs, are considered among world's most beautiful buildings, alongside with such other famous architectural *pièces de résistance* as the Athens' *Parthenon* and the *Taj-Mahal*. Luncheon will give tour members an opportunity to sample some of the delicacies of the sophisticated Yucatan cuisine. Return to Merida, with the remainder of the afternoon and the evening free.



Day 7 (Wednesday) CHICHEN-ITZÁ and THE CARIBBEAN

Drive past tiny Mayan villages and through the large *sisal* plantations to Chichen-Itzá, the largest and most impressive of all Mayan sites in the country, and certainly also on UNESCO's Heritage list. Visits to the Kukulcán Pyramid, Warrior's Temple, Hall of Thousand Columns and the Ball Game Court will help us to round-up our vision of the fascinating Maya culture.



A farewell *Yucatecan* luncheon in a lovely old *hacienda* will mark the conclusion of this beautiful journey through Mexican lands, as we now continue eastward to country's Caribbean coast, with its white-sand beaches and transparent, turquoise waters, where you start your beach holiday in the fashionable resort of Cancun.

Day 8 & 9 (Thursday & Friday) CANCUN

Free time at your leisure in Cancun

Day 10 (Saturday) CANCUN

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

Day 11 (Sunday) LONDON

Arrive back in the UK.



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

Prices include:

- Return scheduled flights in economy class
- Airport taxes and charges are current prices
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure in Mexico
- 9 nights accommodation at selected hotel with daily breakfast
- Domestic flight from Mexico City to Merida on Day 5
- 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
- Lunches on Days 6 & 7 (with tips to waiters included)

Not included:

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

Prices :

3* Hotel Option : from £1295 per person sharing twin/double room

Hotels : Hotel Marlowe, Mexico City / Colonial Hotel, Merida / Hotel Q Bay, Cancun

4* Hotel Option : from £1559 per person sharing twin/double room

Hotels : Fiesta Inn Centro Histórico, Mexico City / Casa de Balam, Merida / Hyatt Regency , Cancun

5* Hotel Option : from £1809 per person sharing twin/double room

Hotels : Gran Melia Mexico Reforma, Mexico City / Fiesta Americana, Merida Fiesta Americana Condessa, Cancun

Extensions :

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

Flight Options :

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

Booking

Contact us with your preferred dates of travel and we will send you a booking form to complete and return with your deposit once the arrangements are confirmed.

Contact details

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