Grand Impressions of Mexico

Day of the Dead Itinerary

Classic Tour | 25 Days | Physical Level 1

Mexico City - San Miguel - Guanajuato - Guadalajara - Oaxaca - Tehuantepec - San Cristobal - Palenque - Campeche - Mérida - Playa del Carmen - Cancun

Discover the soul of Mexico on this comprehensive journey through ancient civilisations, colonial treasures, and living Indigenous traditions. From the bustling markets of Mexico City to the turquoise cenotes of the Riviera Maya, experience the perfect introduction to Mexico's rich cultural tapestry and natural wonders.

- Wander evocative pre-Columbian sites
- Learn about artist Frida Kahlo
- Discover the Riviera Maya

TOUR MAP

GRAND IMPRESSIONS OF MEXICO TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) and Local Guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Mexico, on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. 'Grand Impressions of Mexico' is rated as a physical level 1 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- Sightseeing at archaeological sites could involve climbing several steps, often without handrails
- You will be required to get on and off various sizes of boats and vehicles throughout the tour
- There will be some uneven surfaces during jungle walks and cenote visits
- Two nights are spent around 2,200 metres (Mexico City & San Cristóbal) and one excursion reaches 3000 metres (Sierra Norte)
- We recommend wearing appropriate, secure footwear to ensure comfort and safety throughout this tour.

Of course, our National Escort and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 25 days in duration including return international flights or 23 days in duration based on 'Land Only'.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour, or when booking pre and post night accommodation with Wendy Wu Tours.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Mexico City and end the tour on Day 23 in Playa del Carmen. An informal Welcome Dinner will be held on Day 1 of the itinerary. If you miss this due to your arrival time, all information will be provided to you at breakfast the following morning.

Day 1: Fly to Mexico City Meals: D

Fly to Mexico City, Mexico's vibrant capital. On arrival at Benito Juárez International Airport you will be warmly greeted by your National Escort and transferred approximately 45 minutes to your hotel.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

Destination Information

Mexico City - As the capital of Mexico, Mexico City is one of the world's largest metropolitan areas with over 21 million people. Built on the site of the ancient Aztec capital Tenochtitlan, the city layers 700 years of history from pre-Hispanic pyramids to colonial palaces to modern skyscrapers. Its strategic location in the Valley of Mexico has given it a focal position in the nation's history, and many great civilisations have ruled from here. The monuments and cultural treasures of these eras are scattered throughout the city, often side by side with contemporary structures.

Day 2: Mexico City & Coyoacán Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, dive into the heart of the capital with a full day exploring both historical and cultural treasures. The tour introduction will take place either at the hotel or on the coach.

Begin at the soaring Metropolitan Cathedral, a living tapestry of baroque and neoclassical chapels, before crossing the square to the National Palace to study Diego Rivera's vast mural cycle charting Mexico's journey from Aztec splendour to modern republic.

Enjoy lunch at a traditional downtown cantina before descending to the Templo Mayor Museum, where glass walkways reveal the twin pyramids of Tenochtitlan. Continue to leafy Coyoacán for timed entry to the iconic Frida Kahlo Museum - Casa Azul, the cobalt-blue house where Frida painted and lived with Diego Rivera.

Today's touring will last approximately 8 hours, on flat, cobblestone surfaces with some stairs to climb.

Destination Information

Metropolitan Cathedral - Built between 1573 and 1813, this is the largest cathedral in Latin America. The cathedral showcases a blend of architectural styles accumulated over its long construction period, from Gothic to Baroque to Neoclassical.

Templo Mayor - The main temple of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan, discovered in 1978. The museum houses thousands of artefacts including the famous stone disc of Coyolxauhqui, the moon goddess.

Frida Kahlo Museum - The former home of Mexico's most famous artist, where visitors can see her studio, personal belongings, and the room where she painted many of her masterpieces while bedridden.

Day 3: Teotihuacán & Basilica of Guadalupe Meals: B, L, D

Leave Mexico City for the ancient metropolis of Teotihuacán, travelling approximately 1h30 minutes, each way depending on city traffic. Walk the Avenue of the Dead and climb the Pyramid of the Sun (optional) - the third-largest pyramid on Earth - for commanding views. Continue to the Pyramid of the Moon and the richly decorated Temple of Quetzalpapálotl.

Visit a family cooperative to learn about traditional uses of obsidian, maguey fibre, and pulque before lunch featuring regional dishes like nopales and slow-braised barbacoa.

Return to visit the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the most important Catholic pilgrimage site in the Americas. View the miraculous tilma bearing the Virgin's image and explore both the 17th-century Old Basilica and the modern circular sanctuary.

Today's sightseeing will last approximately 9 hours.

Destination Information

Teotihuacán - Once the largest city in the pre-Columbian Americas, Teotihuacán flourished between 100-650 CE. The name means "place where gods were born" in Nahuatl. The Avenue of the Dead stretches 2.5km through the ceremonial centre, connecting the major pyramids and palaces.

Basilica of Guadalupe - Built to commemorate the 1531 apparitions of the Virgin Mary to Juan Diego. The modern basilica can hold 10,000 worshippers and houses the original tilma (cloak) bearing the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron saint of Mexico.

Day 4: Travel to San Miguel de Allende Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, journey 3h30 minutes northwest across the central Mexican plateau to the colonial gem of San Miguel de Allende. Break the journey for lunch before arriving in this UNESCO World Heritage city.

Take a relaxed orientation walk through San Miguel's historic centre, pausing before the candy-pink spires of the Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel and discovering hidden courtyards behind heavy wooden doors.

As the sun sets, gather on a stylish rooftop terrace for dinner, watching church domes glow amber while sampling modern Guanajuato cuisine.

Today's sightseeing will last 7 hours.

Destination Information

San Miguel de Allende - Founded in 1542, this perfectly preserved colonial city became a cradle of Mexican independence and later an international artists' haven. Its historic centre, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008, features narrow cobblestone streets, baroque churches, and mansions with flower-draped courtyards. The famous Parroquia church, with its Gothic Revival towers designed by indigenous architect Zeferino Gutiérrez, dominates the main square.

Day 5: San Miguel de Allende Meals: B, L, D

Begin with a 20-minute stroll to Guadalupe Trejo's airy studio for a private cartoneria workshop. Guadalupe, whose family has crafted papier-maché for four generations, guides you through creating a brightly coloured alebrije, catrina, or Mexican mask. Learn the legends and symbolism behind each figure as you mould, reinforce, and paint your piece.

Break for lunch at a family-run fonda before enjoying free time to browse galleries, relax in Parque Juárez, or explore the hotel's roof terrace.

Reconvene at dusk for dinner in one of San Miguel's acclaimed rooftop bistros, savouring contemporary cuisine as the Parroquia's spires glow in the sunset.

Sightseeing today will last approximately 6 hours.

Destination Information

Alebrijes - These fantastical creatures originated in Mexico City in the 1930s when artist Pedro Linares created them from papier-maché. The tradition spread to Oaxaca where they're carved from wood, but San Miguel maintains the original papier-maché technique. Each colourful creature combines elements from different animals and is believed to be a spiritual guide.

Day 6: Travel to Guanajuato Meals: B, L, D

Journey 1h30 minutes through the crumpled hills of the Sierra de Guanajuato to reach this former silver-mining capital. After lunch, explore Guanajuato's storybook centre on foot, following your guide through flower-decked plazas and the city's famous subterranean roads.

At twilight, experience a private Callejoneada - a costumed estudiantina of student musicians serenades you through the maze of alleyways, regaling the group with songs, jokes, and the dramatic telling of "La Leyenda del Callejón del Beso." Each traveller receives a hand-made ceramic porrón as a keepsake.

You will spend approximately 6 hours sightseeing, walking through narrow alleys.

Destination Information

Guanajuato - Once the world's leading silver-producing city, Guanajuato's wealth funded magnificent baroque churches and mansions. Its unique underground street system was created when the river was redirected through tunnels. The University of Guanajuato, founded in 1732, gave birth to the estudiantina tradition of student troubadours who still serenade visitors through the narrow alleyways.

Day 7: Travel to Guadalajara Meals: B, L, D

Visit the Diego Rivera House-Museum, where Mexico's famous muralist spent his childhood. Ride the funicular up to the Pípila Monument for breathtaking views of candy-coloured houses cascading down the ravine.

Drive approximately 4 hours west to Guadalajara, Jalisco's capital. Explore the historic centre's four linked plazas and the UNESCO-listed Hospicio Cabañas with its Orozco murals.

Celebrate Jalisco's musical soul with a cultural dinner accompanied by live mariachi and folkloric dance, where colourful dresses swirl to the sounds of guitarrón and trumpets.

Today's sightseeing lasts approximately 10 hours, with stairs to climb to board the funicular.

Destination Information

Guadalajara - Mexico's second-largest city and birthplace of mariachi music, tequila, and the Mexican hat dance. Founded in 1542, it became the commercial heart of western Mexico. The city is famous for its contributions to Mexican culture, from cuisine (including tortas ahogadas) to music and crafts.

Day 8: **Tequila** Meals: B, L, D

Journey 1 hour to the Pueblo Mágico of Tequila for an 11:00 am reservation at José Cuervo's La Rojeña distillery - the oldest working tequila house on Earth. Tour the vaulted brick ovens, fermenters, and resting cellars before a private tasting of Plata, Reposado, and exclusive Añejo.

Stroll Tequila's cobbled streets and enjoy lunch featuring regional specialities.

Sightseeing will last approximately 7 hours.

Destination Information

Tequila - This small town in the heart of the blue agave region has been producing Mexico's national spirit for over 400 years. The volcanic soil and climate create perfect conditions for growing blue agave. In 2006, the agave landscape and ancient tequila production facilities were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 9: **Fly to Oaxaca** Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to Guadalajara International Airport for a short domestic flight (1h30 minutes) to Oaxaca. Upon arrival, take an orientation walk along cobbled Alcalá Street, visiting the ornate Templo de Santo Domingo and the bustling Benito Juárez market. End in the tree-shaded Zócalo where brass bands keep the colonial square humming.

For lunch, stop at the renowned Mercado 20 de Noviembre for lunch at the famous "pasillo de las carnes" - rows of charcoal grills serving tasajo beef and cecina enchilada.

Regroup for dinner sampling one of the region's seven classic moles, followed by artisanal mezcal tasting.

Sightseeing will last 9 hours today.

Destination Information

Oaxaca - The cultural capital of indigenous Mexico, Oaxaca is home to 16 distinct ethnic groups and renowned for its complex cuisine, traditional crafts, and pre-Hispanic archaeological sites. The city's historic centre, founded in 1529, showcases stunning colonial architecture built from green volcanic stone. Oaxaca is considered the culinary capital of Mexico, famous for its seven varieties of mole and over 400 types of mezcal.

Day 10: Monte Alban Meals: B, L, D

Drive fifteen minutes uphill to Monte Albán, the great Zapotec capital perched 400 metres above the valley floor. A specialist guide leads you around the Grand Plaza, ball-court, and Observatory, explaining how astronomers tracked solstices over 2,000 years ago.

Return for lunch before diving deeper into Oaxaca's cultural heart. Sample roasted chapulines in the Benito Juárez market, visit the Museo de las Culturas to view Mixtec goldwork, and explore the studios where Francisco Toledo fostered the city's printmaking renaissance.

The main pyramid platforms (South Platform, North Platform, Observatory, etc.) each have steep staircases. These are 30–60 steps per pyramid depending on which ones you choose to climb. Some visitors only explore the plazas and lower levels, meaning far fewer steps (under 100).

You will spend approximately 9 hours exploring today.

Destination Information

Monte Albán - One of the earliest cities in Mesoamerica, Monte Albán was the Zapotec capital for over 1,000 years (500 BCE - 750 CE). The site features spectacular panoramic views and mysterious carved stones called "Danzantes" that may represent sacrificial victims or dancers. The site demonstrates advanced astronomical knowledge and urban planning.

Day 11: Oaxacan Cooking Masterclass Meals: B, L, D

Begin with a visit to a vibrant neighbourhood market, meeting local producers and selecting fresh, seasonal ingredients for your cooking class. Continue to a private kitchen for a four-hour immersive culinary experience, learning the secrets of traditional Oaxacan cuisine as you prepare a complete local menu, including an appetiser, main course, side dish and traditional salsa. Sit down together to enjoy your creations, accompanied by a fresh fruit agua fresca.

Conclude with dinner at beloved "Tacos Roy" (or similar) for authentic al pastor and wood-grilled tasajo carved onto warm tortillas.

Destination Information

Oaxacan Cuisine - Considered Mexico's most sophisticated regional cuisine, Oaxacan food combines pre-Hispanic ingredients with colonial influences. The famous seven moles each contain 20-30 ingredients including various chillies, spices, nuts, and chocolate. Other specialities include grasshoppers (chapulines), cheese-filled peppers (chiles rellenos), and mezcal, the traditional agave spirit.

Day 12: Sierra Norte Mountains Meals: B, L, D

Journey 1h45 minutes into the Sierra Norte mountains to the welcoming Zapotec village of Benito Juárez. A local family greets you at their farmstead for hands-on cooking using organic produce, followed by a hearty home-cooked meal.

Village guides lead you along a forested path to the Mirador at 3,000 metres elevation, offering sweeping views before the thrill of crossing a hanging suspension bridge.

Descend 5h30 minutes to the hot, windswept lowlands of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, arriving at the Pacific coast near Salina Cruz at sunset.

Please note that today's sightseeing is at an altitude of 3000 metres.

Destination Information

Sierra Norte - These cloud forests north of Oaxaca City are home to several indigenous Zapotec communities practicing sustainable ecotourism. At elevations up to 3,000 metres, the mountains offer cooler temperatures and diverse ecosystems including oak and pine forests. The communities maintain traditional agricultural practices and have developed community-based tourism as an alternative to logging.

Day 13: Sumidero Canyon Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, journey 6h30 minutes into Chiapas and reach the colonial river-port of Chiapa de Corzo. Board a speedy lancha for a 32-kilometre journey into Sumidero Canyon, where sheer limestone walls soar over 1,000 metres above the Grijalva River.

Watch for basking crocodiles, spider monkeys, and the moss-draped "Christmas Tree" waterfall as you cruise through this spectacular gorge.

Continue 2 hours to the highland city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, set 2,200 metres above sea level in the cool pine-scented mountains.

Please be advised that today's program includes boarding a boat. We recommend wearing appropriate, secure footwear to ensure comfort and safety.

Destination Information

Sumidero Canyon - This spectacular gorge was formed over millions of years as the Grijalva River cut through limestone. The canyon walls reach heights of over 1,000 metres and are home to diverse wildlife including crocodiles, spider monkeys, and over 200 bird species. The canyon is part of Sumidero Canyon National Park, established in 1980.

Day 14: Community village visits Meals: B, L, D

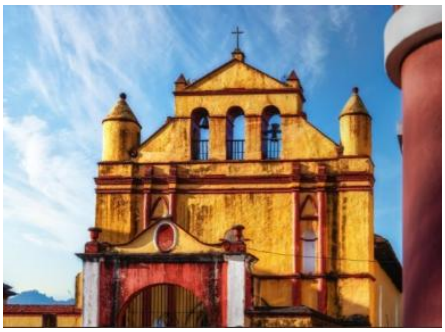
Discover the rich Maya heritage of Chiapas with visits to the Tzotzil Maya communities of San Juan Chamula and Zinacantán. Experience their unique blend of pre-Hispanic and Catholic traditions and visit a family weaving workshop before enjoying a special, immersive lunch at a locally owned restaurant, where a traditional Pox welcome toast and multi-course feast showcase the authentic flavours and culinary heritage of Chiapas. Later, explore San Cristóbal de las Casas at leisure before an included dinner featuring more regional favourites.

Sightseeing will be approximately 6 hours today.

Destination Information

Tzotzil Maya Communities - The Tzotzil are one of the largest Maya groups in Chiapas, maintaining their ancient language and customs despite 500 years of outside influence. San Juan Chamula practices a unique form of folk Catholicism that incorporates pre-Hispanic rituals, while Zinacantán is renowned for its textiles featuring sacred symbols and bright colours that reflect the community's connection to flowers and nature.

Day 15: San Cristobal Meals: B, L, D



Take a guided walking tour of San Cristóbal de las Casas, whose narrow lanes and clay-tiled roofs have changed little since the 16th century. Visit the golden-yellow Cathedral, climb to San Cristóbalito hill for panoramic views, and explore the cultural centre Na Bolom, former home of explorer-photographer Gertrude Duby Blom.

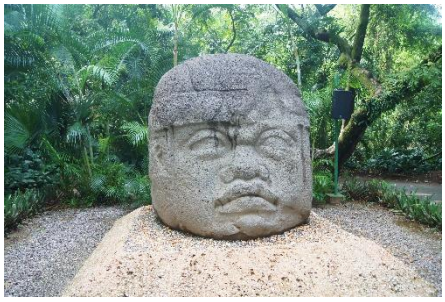
The afternoon is free to explore Real de Guadalupe pedestrian street, sip single-origin espresso, or visit the highland textiles museum.

Today's sightseeing is 5 hours, and involves a short hill climb and short, steep staircases of approximately 120 steps.

Destination Information

San Cristóbal de las Casas - Founded in 1528, this colonial city served as the regional capital of Chiapas for centuries. Its cobblestone streets, red-tiled roofs, and colourful buildings create a fairy-tale atmosphere. The city is now a centre for indigenous rights activism and cultural preservation, home to numerous Maya communities and international organisations working with indigenous peoples.

Day 16: Travel to Palenque Meals: B, L, D



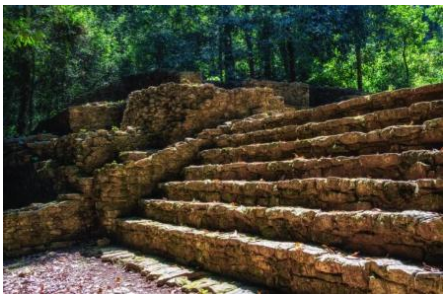
Depart the cool pine-scented heights for the steamy lowlands of northern Chiapas. After breakfast, drive 5h30 minutes to the city of Villahermosa, the capital of the state of Tabasco, where you will stop for lunch. Visit the nearby Museo La Venta, an open-air archaeological park featuring monumental sculptures set along shaded jungle paths. The trail showcases artefacts and sculptures, including three colossal stone heads, from the ancient Olmec civilisation that once thrived in the Tabasco region.

Continue for a further 2h30 minutes to reach Palenque town back in Chiapas, gateway to one of Mesoamerica's greatest archaeological parks.

Destination Information

Palenque - One of the most important Maya archaeological sites, Palenque flourished from 226-799 CE. The city is famous for the tomb of King Pakal, who ruled for 68 years. The intricate architecture features detailed stucco reliefs and hieroglyphic texts that have provided crucial insights into Maya history and culture. Only about 10% of the site has been excavated, with the remainder still hidden in the jungle.

Day 17: Palenque Ruins Meals: B, L, D



Rise early (depart about 7am) to explore the forested Palenque National Park (travelling 15 minutes) before the heat and crowds arrive. A specialist guide leads you through soaring ceiba trees to the monumental Temple of the Inscriptions, where ruler Pakal's jade-masked tomb lay hidden for over 1,300 years.

From the summit, gaze over emerald canopy punctuated by the Palace and Cross Temples, each carved with intricate mythological panels. Wander hidden pathways to structures still half-swallowed by vines.

Continue 45 minutes to Roberto Barrios waterfalls for swimming beneath overhanging palms in jade-green cascades.

Sightseeing will last approximately 7 hours.

Day 18: Travel to Campeche Meals: B, L, D

Drive 5h30 minutes northeast through Tabasco's cattle savannahs to the Gulf coast. Enter the UNESCO-listed harbour city of San Francisco de Campeche, where pastel mansions and thick coral-stone ramparts hint at a storied past of Spanish merchants and pirate raids.

Take a leisurely orientation walk through Puerta de Tierra gate to the baroque Cathedral, along arcaded Calle 59, and up onto preserved bastions for sunset views across the malecón seafront, lasting 60 minutes.

Destination Information

Campeche - Founded in 1540 as San Francisco de Campeche, this port city became wealthy from trade with Spain but suffered constant pirate attacks. The impressive fortification system, built between 1663-1704, includes walls, bastions, and forts that successfully protected the city. In 1999, the historic fortified city was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 19: Uxmal Meals: B, L, D

Begin with a 1hour guided walk inside Campeche's perfectly preserved walled city, climbing ramparts where cannons once faced marauding pirates and exploring the elegant Plaza Principal.

Drive 2h30 minutes east to UNESCO-listed Uxmal in the Puuc region. Discover the astronomy and acoustics behind the soaring Pyramid of the Magician, explore the intricately mosaicked Nunnery Quadrangle, and admire serpents and jaguars decorating the Governor's Palace.

Continue 1 hour to Mérida, capital of Yucatán, for dinner featuring lime-bright sopa de lima and slow-roasted cochinita pibil.

Sightseeing will last approximately 9 hours.

Destination Information

Uxmal - Built between 700-1000 CE, Uxmal represents the pinnacle of late Classic Maya architecture in the Puuc style. The name means "thrice built" in Maya, referring to its construction phases. The Pyramid of the Magician, unusually oval-shaped, was built according to Maya astronomical calculations. The Governor's Palace is considered one of the finest examples of pre-Columbian architecture in the Americas.

Day 20: Mérida Meals: B, L, D

Set out for a guided immersion into Mérida's vibrant daily life. Visit the bustling Mercado de San Benito for cochinita tacos and the Mercado de Artesanías García Rejón for handmade textiles and crafts.

Stroll through the historic Plaza Grande to the Cathedral of San Ildefonso - the oldest on the mainland Americas - and admire murals in the Palacio de Gobierno. Walk the elegant Paseo de Montejo, lined with grand 19th-century mansions from the henequén boom.

Enjoy lunch at El Lucero, a classic local botanero, sampling traditional Yucatecan dishes like papadzules and sikil p'ak.

Sightseeing will take approximately 7 hours.

Destination Information

Mérida - Founded in 1542 on the site of the Maya city T'ho, Mérida became wealthy during the henequén (sisal) boom of the late 19th century. The city's grand mansions along Paseo de Montejo reflect this golden age. Mérida is known for its distinct Yucatecan cuisine, which blends Maya, Spanish, and Lebanese influences, creating unique dishes like cochinita pibil and sopa de lima.

Day 21: Chichen Itza

Meals: B, L, D

Depart early for Mexico's most iconic archaeological wonder: Chichén Itzá. Arriving soon after opening, embark on a guided exploration. Discover how equinox sunlight creates the illusion of a feathered serpent gliding down the Pyramid of Kukulkán, test acoustics in the Great Ball Court, and learn about jade offerings at the Cenote Sagrado.

Visit a Maya village for traditional lunch with a local family before continuing 3 hours to the Caribbean coast. On your way to Playa del Carmen, make a stop at Valladolid - a vibrant colonial city. Check into your hotel in Playa del Carmen for dinner overlooking the turquoise sea.

Destination Information

Chichén Itzá - One of the New Seven Wonders of the World, Chichén Itzá was a major Maya city from 600-1200 CE. The site demonstrates advanced knowledge of astronomy, mathematics, and architecture. The Pyramid of Kukulkán contains 365 steps representing the solar year, and during equinoxes, shadows create the illusion of a serpent descending the staircase.

Day 22: Cenote Azul

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, you will visit Cenote Azul - a popular open-air freshwater cenote, famous to Playa del Carmen. Here, you can relax in the sun or swim in the turquoise waters. Enjoy your afternoon at leisure in Playa del Carmen before this evening's farewell dinner.

You will spend approximately 5 hours exploring today.

Destination Information

Cenotes - These natural sinkholes are formed when limestone bedrock collapses, revealing groundwater pools beneath. Sacred to the Maya, who believed them to be gateways to the underworld, cenotes provided fresh water in the Yucatán's arid landscape. The Riviera Maya has over 6,000 cenotes, ranging from open pools to cathedral-like caverns.

Days 23-25: Depart Cancun Meals: B

After breakfast, you'll be transferred to Cancún International Airport (approximately 1 hour) for your onward overnight flight home, arriving back in New Zealand 2 days later due to crossing the International Date Line. Late check-out is not included. Please contact our Reservations team if you wish to enquire about booking this.

GRAND IMPRESSIONS OF MEXICO TOUR TRAVEL INFORMATION

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS & VISAS:

New Zealand passport holders currently do not require a visa to enter Mexico for travel up to 180 days. Upon arrival, you will receive a tourist card (FMM) which must be retained and presented when departing Mexico. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back in New Zealand.

Please note: For those transiting through the USA, you will require an ESTA visa. This is to be arranged by yourself, and Wendy Wu Tours cannot assist with this visa.

When travelling to Quintana Roo (including Playa del Carmen), you are required to pay the local tourism tax (Visitax). This is a one-off payment of approximately 283 - 415 MXN per person, regardless of the length of your stay. Please note that the amounts can fluctuate due to exchange rate changing.

You are advised to pay online before travelling using the official Visitax website which can be found here: https://www.visitax.gob.mx/sitio/. Once payment is complete, you will receive a confirmation with a QR code. Please save this on your phone or print a copy, as it may be requested when leaving the state.

If you are unable to make the payment before your holiday, don't worry. You can complete it while you are in Mexico, as airport kiosks may be available or your National Escort will be able to assist you with either accessing the official website, or phoning and making the payment.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website https://www.wendywutours.co.nz/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

EATING IN MEXICO:

Mexican cuisine is celebrated worldwide for its incredible diversity, bold flavours, and rich cultural heritage. UNESCO has recognised it as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, highlighting its importance not only as food but as a cultural expression. From the sizzling street tacos of Mexico City to the intricate, multi-layered moles of Oaxaca, each region offers unique ingredients, techniques, and traditions passed down through generations.

On our classic group tours, all meals (excluding drinks) are included, giving you the opportunity to experience these local flavours. Menus are carefully curated to reflect regional specialties, seasonal ingredients, and traditional cooking methods, whether sampling fresh seafood along the coast, hearty stews in the highlands, or artisanal cheeses and chocolates from smaller villages.

We understand that dietary needs are important. Food allergies and special dietary requirements are carefully accommodated - please inform us in advance so our guides and local restaurants can provide safe, suitable alternatives without compromising on the authentic experience.

Whether enjoying a casual market snack or a more formal meal, each dish tells a story of Mexico's history, geography, and vibrant culinary culture, making dining an essential part of your journey.

DEVELOPMENT IN MEXICO:

Mexico has a well-developed tourism infrastructure, particularly in areas visited on this tour. However, standards may vary from those in New Zealand. All suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We ask that you use common sense and follow advice from your National Escort or Local Guides.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation has been carefully selected for its convenient location, comfort or character. Depending on the destination, this may range from a business hotel in a city to a family-run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage-style hotel.

In Mexico, hotels are frequently housed in historic colonial buildings built around a central courtyard. As a result, many rooms have interior windows overlooking the courtyard rather than exterior views. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not offer all Western amenities. Hotels are generally of a local three- to four-star standard; however, Mexico does not have an international hotel classification system, and facilities and standards can differ from those in New Zealand. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and local partners to ensure they meet our required standards.

All group tour hotels offer private Western-style bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and a telephone. Please be aware that plumbing and electricity supplies can be intermittent, and the electricity in your room may be switched off while you are out. If you experience any difficulties during your stay, please speak to your National Escort or Local Guide, who will be happy to assist.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions that demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places that hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Mexico is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed amongst your main service providers (for example local guides and drivers) throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the national escort. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Main and inner-city roads could be congested, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner.

On certain excursions, boat trips allow you to explore lakes, rivers, or coastal areas, offering unique perspectives and access to locations not reachable by road. All transport is organised as part of the tour, with professional drivers and guides ensuring smooth connections between destinations. Whether cruising along waterways or winding through highland roads, travel is designed to be comfortable, safe, and convenient, so you can focus on experiencing Mexico’s landscapes and culture.

APPROPRIATE DRESS:

When visiting churches and religious sites, dress conservatively with covered shoulders and long trousers or skirts. Many religious sites require removal of hats. For cenote swimming, bring swimwear, towels, and water shoes for rocky surfaces.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

Wendy Wu does not give specific health advice, but we do recommend you see your doctor at least six weeks prior to travel for advice and to allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Please remember to take your itinerary with you. Safe travel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements. You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice. If a visa is required, our Visa Department will be in touch with the paperwork and next steps. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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