



MAYAN ADVENTURE
Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala
PALENQUE
11:11:11
28th Oct – 28th Nov 2011

DAY 1. Oct 29th. Saturday Guatemala City

Arrive in Guatemala City. From the airport you will be taken by private transport to our Hotel to await the arrival of the other tour members. We will spend the night in Guatemala city to prepare for an early start in the morning.

DAY 2. Oct 30th. Chichicastenango – Lake Atitlan

After breakfast at the Hotel we make an early start for Chichicastenango. This is a colorful town known for its crafts and textiles as well as its beautiful cemetery. We will tour the town before visiting the church of Santo Thomas built on the ruins of a Mayan Temple. From here we climb the hill Pacual Abaj where we may get to assist in a Mayan ritual ceremony.

The afternoon sees us making our way through some of the most spectacular scenery in the world, surrounded by the amazing volcanoes – San Pedro, Atitlan and Toliman.

Tonight we stay at the Hotel Posada Don Rodrigo.

DAY 3. Oct 31st. Lake Atitlan

Today we take a boat and explore Lake Atitlan. We venture to San Juan La Laguna to visit some very interesting sites including a visit to the Q'omaneel Association which grows plants for medicinal purposes. We also stop at the shrine of San Simon and a gallery of primitive art.

We board the boat once more and head to Santiago Atitlan and stop for lunch before touring the town

DAY 4. Nov 1st. Sololá

As part of the Festival of The Dead we visit the cemetery in Sololá to witness the celebration and ceremony of this special time. . We will also visit the colorful markets where you will have a chance to buy the exquisite textile and craft work of this region. We will also take part in a traditional Mayan Ceremony.

DAY 5. Nov 2nd. Antigua

This morning we Travel to Antigua, having lunch on the way. Antigua.

We stay at the hotel Posada Don Rodrigo.

This afternoon we will take a tour of this very beautiful colonial city which was established in 1524 as the second capital of Guatemala. The town is guarded vigilantly by the volcanoes – Aqua, Fuego and Acatenango.

DAY 6. Nov 3rd

In the morning we visit several villages around Antigua – Santa Maria de Jesus on the foothills of the volcano Aqua. We also pass through the old capital of Guatemala, Ciudad Vieja and then onto another native village – San Antonio Aguas Callientes well known for its distinctive weavings.

DAY 7. Nov 4th Antigua – Copan

This morning we leave at 8.30 for a long drive to the magnificent ruins of Copan in Honduras, just a few kilometers over the border. We will stop for lunch as well as to visit the museum of paleontology near Zacapa.

When we arrive in Copan we will visit the Mountain Macaw Reserve to see these colorful and loud feathered friends.

We will stay at the Hotel Marina Copan – A lovely older style hotel built around a lushly vegetated fragrant courtyard (and pool)

DAY 8. Nov 5th. Copan

Today we explore the beautiful Copan Ruins. This truly amazing site was known as “The University of the Mayans” This site was established during the “Golden Era” (250AD to 900 AD)

There is a Museum close by which we will also visit.

After this you can explore the very pretty township.

Accom. At the Hotel Marina Copan.

DAY 9. Nov 6th. Copan – Rio Dulce

This morning we depart early in the cool of the day to journey to Rio Dulce (Sweet River) where we will spend the night at the Hotel Banana Palms. On the way we call at the amazing thermal waterfalls in the jungle where you can swim.

DAY 10. Nov 7th. Rio Dulce – Tikal

After breakfast a private boat arrives at the hotel to take us on a tour of immense beauty. The Rio Dulce is in the tropical area of Guatemala, on the eastern side of the country. We cruise along this beautiful river all the way to the Caribbean Coast. The river is 42 km long and stretches from Guatemala’s largest lake, Izabal, to Amatique Bay on the Caribbean Coast. It flows through an ever-changing landscape of flat rainforest to sheer cliff walls of a spectacular 91 m river gorge. There are modern marinas, protected wildlife areas and manatee breeding waters, natural hot springs and abundant wildlife. (Bring you swimming gear)

The boat brings us back to our hotel to pick up our luggage. There will be a car waiting to take us to Tikal where we will spend the night at the Jaguar inn – on of the few hotels actually in the Tikal National Park itself.

DAY 11. Nov 8th. Tikal

This morning we arise very early to see the sunrise from the top of the temple at Tikal. This is a special privilege as the park does not open until much later. We will participate in a sunrise ceremony and after breakfast will be taken by an expert Maya guide to investigate these stunning ruins and incredible achievements of these fascinating ancient people.

The veils between dimensions are very thin here and especially so on this cosmically charged day. It is most auspicious to be here at one of the most powerful places on Earth on one of the most powerful days.

At its height, Tikal was home to over 100,000 Maya and was a cultural and political centre. I personally found it to be one of the most “spiritually charged” areas I have visited. It is a huge and very beautiful site, abundant with wildlife – howler monkeys, spider monkeys, coati mundi, jaguars and ocelot are seen in this protected rainforest reserve. There have been 300 species of bird identified here including toucans, mot-mots, parrots and native turkeys. I even saw a huge hairy tarantula when I was last there.

In the afternoon you are free to wander on your own or may like to visit the museum.

At the end of the day we will be picked up and taken to Flores where we will spend the night at the Hotel Casona De Las Islas.

DAY 12. Nov 9th. Flores – Palenque, Mexico

Today we leave Beautiful Guatemala and make our way to Mexico via the Usumacinta River. We will be met by our guide at the border and will take a boat to the magnificent ruins of Yaxchilan

We will stay the night at the Escudo Jaguar Hotel.

DAY 13. Nov 10th (Full Moon)

From there we will be driven to Palenque – home of the legendary King Pacal. We make a slight detour on the way to visit the Bonampak murals. These are said to be the best preserved Mayan murals and provide a wealth of information about the Maya. These murals are thought to have been painted in the late 8th century AD and depict battles, courtly behavior, sacrifices as well as details about public festivals. The name was given to the site by an archeologist and means “painted walls” in the Maya language.

We stay in Palenque at the Kin Ha Hotel.

DAY 14. Nov 11th Palenque 11/11/11

This morning we rise early and make our way to the very beautiful jungle ruins of Palenque. This ceremonial complex once covered over 25 square miles in its hey day (100 -900AD). Only ½ square mile has been excavated to date. Much of this site lies hidden in the jungle but may be explored with a good guide if you are fit.

As this is a very powerful day we hope to do a ceremony with local Mayan priest Ca'yun and his crystal skull in the temple deep in the jungle.

DAY 15. 12th Nov. Misol-Ha, Aqua Azul – San Christobal

This is a day for play. In the morning we visit the spectacular Misol-Ha waterfall. This is situated in the jungle and there is a path that leads up to a cave so that you can stand behind the 10m waterfall and look through. There is a pool at the base of the falls that I went swimming in but the safety of this depends on the water levels on the day.

From here we take a short drive to the exquisite Aqua Azul Cascades. Clear blue water cascades down the river for quite a distance, forming beautiful pools of waist deep water suitable for swimming in the designated areas. Market stalls line the river banks and I was able to purchase pieces of meteorite from here.

Later in the day we travel to San Christobal las Casas

DAY 16. Nov 13th. San Christobal

This is a beautiful Colonial town with wonderful markets where many indigenous groups sell their produce and crafts. The colourful costumes of the local people add a richness to the market experience. We visit the market in the morning and in the afternoon visit San Juan Chamula to visit the church of the Maya Chamulas to connect with the sacred traditions of the Maya.

DAY 17. Nov 14th. Canon Del Sumidero

Today we make our way to the stunning Canon Del Sumidero travelling up the river through the canyon to visit waterfalls and caves.

DAY 18. Nov 15th. San Cristobal – Palenque

Today we make our way back to Palenque via Tonina and spend the night at Hotel Kin Ha once more.

DAY 19. Nov 16th. Palenque – Campeche

We visit Edzna in Campeche This is a beautiful site of temples and pyramids set in jungle surrounds. You will have an opportunity to climb the pyramid and connect with the special energies of this site. We stay in Campeche for the night at Hotel Baluartes.

DAY 20. Nov 17th. Campeche – Uxmal

Today we make our way to one of the best known Maya Cities – Uxmal The name means “thrice Built” in ancient Mayan and refers to the “Magician’s Pyramid”. The Maya would often build one structure over another and in this case 5 stages of construction have been found. Uxmal was one of the largest cities of the Yucatan and at its height housed about 25,000 Maya. In the Puuc region, it flourished in the late classic period (600 – 900AD)

I found the “Nun’s Quadrangle” a very powerful place and our guide showed us an interdimensional portal here.

There is a light show at the Uxmal site in the evening.

Tonight we will spend the night at the Hotel villas Arqueologicas Uxmal.

DAY 21. Nov 18th. Kabah – Loltun Caves

From here we travel south to Kabah, which means “Strong Hand” An alternative name is Kabahaucac – royal snake in hand.

This is a very beautiful site and its most famous structure is “the Palace of the Masks”, the façade of which is decorated with hundred of stone masks of the rain God Chaac.

Uxmal and Kabah are joined by a 18km long pedestrian causeway, 5 meters wide. It has monumental arches at each end.

From here the drive to the Loltun Caves. This is one of the largest cave systems in the Yucatan. We will be taken on a guided tour deep into the caves to see the stalactites, stalagmites, petroglyphs and paintings.

This is a very sacred place.

We make our way to the beautiful city of Merida which will be our base for two days.

We stay Hotel Los Aluxes, Merida for 3 nights.

DAY 22. Nov 19th. Dzibilchaltun – Ake

This morning we visit a very special site not far from Merida – Dzibilchaltun – the place where there is writing on the stones. Here we find the Museum of the Maya People which is an excellent and very comprehensive museum. To reach the ruins we follow a winding path to the “Temple of the Seven Dolls” because when excavated, seven dolls were found and now reside in a museum in Mexico City. The temple is astrologically aligned to frame the rising sun at the spring and autumn equinox. The energy here is very powerful.

Another attraction of this site is the Xlakah Cenote also Known as “the Womb of the Mother” as it is shaped like a uterus and has a long tunnel at the deep end. The waters here are totally changed every 24hs. It is a fantastic place to swim.

In the afternoon we visit AKE, east of Merida. This is not a touristy spot but is quite wonderful with unusual stone pillars atop a step pyramid platform.

Return to the Hotel.

Saturday night in Merida is a real treat. The streets in the town centre are closed off and people dance and party in the streets to the sounds of local bands. It creates a very festive atmosphere with all ages participating.

DAY 23. Nov 20th. Chichen-Itza – IK Kil

Today we visit the famous site of Chichen Itza (City of the Water Witches)

This was the most impressive ceremonial centre of South Eastern Mexico. It was a place of power and home to the Itzas and was dedicated to the worship of Kukulcan, the feathered serpent. It was founded in 435 AD and around 900AD; the Itza tribe appeared bringing a new architectural style. The Itzas made this a most impressive and imposing city.. the Pyramid of Kukulcan or El Castillo is well known for the way the light and shadow at the times of the equinox creates the image of a serpent descending the stairs.

Chichen Itza features prominently in the 2012 prophecies with many planning to be at the ball court for the Dec solstice in 2012. The sacred cenote is also a significant area here. Chichen Itza means “mouth of the Well of the Itzas” and many treasures were offered to these waters.

In the afternoon we visit the incredible beautiful cenote IK Kil. This cenote is a large circular well like structure filled with crystal clear water. Vines hang down into the water creating a magical curtain with birds flitting to and fro between the vines and small waterfalls. A great place for a swim and there is a very good restaurant on site.

Tonight we stay in the magical town of Valladolid at Hotel del Marques.

DAY 24. Nov 21st. Dzitnup (X'keken) and Sammula Cenotes – Ek Balam

This morning we travel to the Dzitnup Cenote which is very special because of the heart shaped opening in the ceiling of the cave. The water is cool and clear and excellent for swimming. You can swim out to the numerous stalactites. It is wonderful to submerge yourself in the special waters of this place. We travel also to another wonderful Cenote – Sammula where you can once more swim in the magical waters of this sacred place.

The afternoon will be spent exploring the magical site of EkBalam. The name means Black Jaguar. It was founded in 100 BC and was one of the most powerful pre Hispanic cities – economically, socially and spiritually. It reached its peak during the late classical period 600 – 1000 AD and covered 12 square kms. There were some 45 structures at the site but one of the most exciting is a recent discovery of Winged Gods resembling Angels. These are incredibly beautiful and are so perfectly preserved they look as if they were done yesterday. This is a Very Special site and was supposedly referred to by Edgar Cayce in a prophetic channeling.

From here we drive back to Merida to the Los Aluxes Hotel.

DAY 25. Nov 22nd. Cancun – Mexico City

Today is spent traveling to Mexico City. From the Airport we are taken to our Hotel for our final days in Mexico. We stay at Hotel Century Reforma, Mexico City for 3 nights.

Day 26. Nov 23rd. Teotihuacán

We travel about 1½ hrs to the north of Mexico City to Teotihuacán, an immense and important prehispanic archeological site. This city is very carefully laid out and the dimensions of the Pyramid of the Sun are thought to be as significant as those of the great Pyramid in Egypt. This site is evidence of a highly advanced civilization and was considered one of the largest cities in ancient Mexico. It began (supposedly) around the time of Christ and flourished until 750AD reaching a maximum population of 200,000 people and an area covering 40 square miles. The temple of the moon is another significant structure at the northern end of the site. It is possible to climb both. We also visit the Temple of Quetzalcoatl before making our way back to our hotel.

DAY 27. Nov 24th. Tour

Today is spent on a tour of Mexico City and the Anthropological Museum. This museum is outstanding and is worthy of several visits but we will make the most of one.

Day 28. Nov 25th. Depart Mexico (partial solar eclipse)

Today you will be transported to the airport to make your own way home after a month in the Magical Lands of the Maya.