

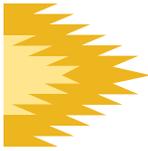
# FRIDA KAHLO: DRESS AND IDENTITY

ART HISTORY MEXICO

*Tia Stephanie* TOURS

**Cultural Journeys**

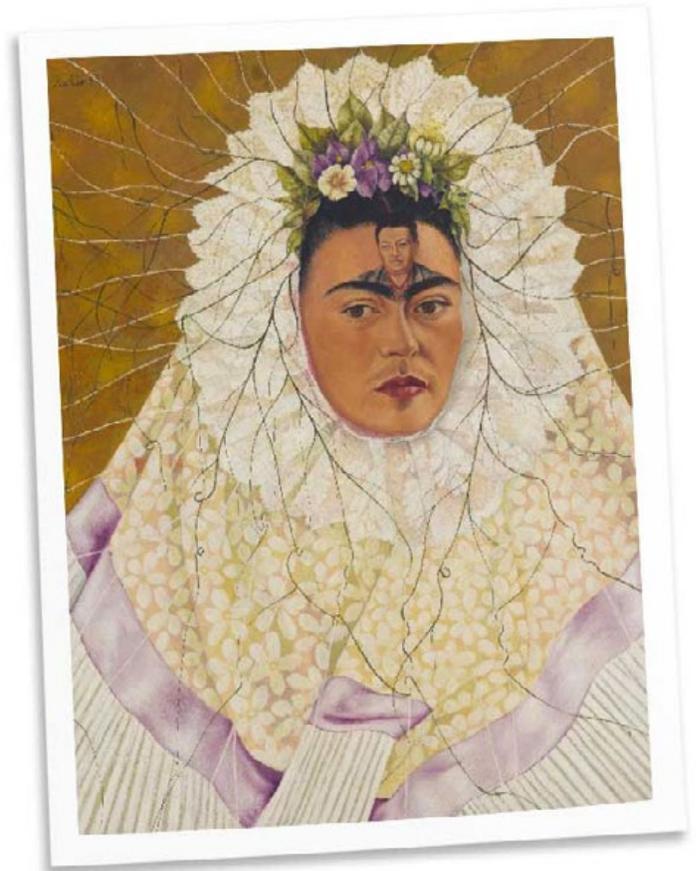
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# FRIDA KAHLO: DRESS AND IDENTITY

ART HISTORY MEXICO

Many aspects of Frida Kahlo have been studied, pondered and admired. From her art, politics, love life, travails, and many others. A singular aspect of Frida Kahlo and her identity was her dress. Frida used dress consciously in the creation of her identity. Through dress, she crafted her image, displaying her cultural heritage from both Europe and Mexico. Who can imagine Frida Kahlo without envisioning her Tehuana dress, the dress and region she most often adorned herself in, particularly for photos. But there were many others, from her “tomicoton” of Hueyapan, Puebla, her beautiful rebozos from Central Mexico, her Mazatec dress from Oaxaca and more. On this journey, we’ll explore how Frida used dress in the creation of her identity, and we’ll travel to some of the regions and communities of Mexico to meet the artisans, who to this day continue the legacy of hand crafting ethnographic clothing, an intimate expression of cultural identity.



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## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the National Museum of Anthropology
- See her most famous painting: The Two Fridas at the Museum of Modern Art
- Travel to Coyoacan to see her childhood home, “The Blue House” and to walk the neighborhood, she and Diego often strolled hand and hand together (and eating tacos and drinking tequila!)
- Attend lectures on Frida Kahlo and her Identity through Dress
- Attend a rebozo expo-venta to learn of the iconic garment of Mexico, Frida often wore. She is seen wearing fine rebozos in many of the most well-known photos by Nick Murray, Imogen Cunningham and others.
- Travel to Puebla to meet with the communities of Hueyapan and San Gabriel Chilac, places that today make hand embroidered and naturally dyed garments that Frida loved and wore (and was photographed in!)
- Travel to Oaxaca City to learn of the multiple ethnic groups and dress of Oaxaca
- Explore the singular universe of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the history of “traje” or dress of the Tehuana women.
- Attend a fashion show of dress from the Isthmus.
- Visit artisans and markets!

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## LOCATION





## ITINERARY

### **Day 1:** **Arrive Mexico City, Welcome Meet and Greet Reception and Fiesta Mexicana Welcome Dinner!**

You will be met at the airport to transfer to our charming hotel. After freshening up, we'll enjoy a fun welcome, "Fiesta Mexicana" dinner to savor some of Mexico's most traditional and beloved dishes, and some of Frida's favorites.

### **Day 2:** **Morning Lecture on the Dress of Frida, Frida Kahlo Museum and Coyoacan, Museo Dolores Olmedo and Floating Gardens!**

We'll begin our day with a breakfast presentation on "Dress and Identity of Frida Kahlo". We'll learn how Frida used dress to create her identity and "Mexicanidad". While she was often most associated with Mexican indigenous dress, Frida also recalled her European roots and family heritage in her dress. After all, Frida was BOTH; and so is Mexico! Following, we'll travel to Coyoacan, the neighborhood Frida grew up in. We'll begin with a welcome visit to the Frida Kahlo Museum, or "Blue House", before we enjoy our own private time with Frida's art,

photographs, letters, clothing, artifacts and more. Leaving the Museum, we'll stroll in Coyoacan, get a delicious snack (a tradition in Mexico is to eat in markets and from street vendors, and something Frida loved to do with Diego). Then, we'll travel to Xochimilco to visit the Dolores Olmedo Museum, where the largest collection of Diego and Frida paintings are held. Our day will end with a fun and relaxing ride on the "trajinera" boats in the "chinampas" of Xochimilco, much as Frida loved to do!

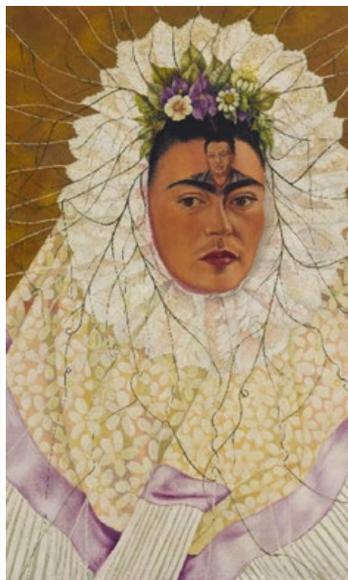
### **Day 3:** **Museum of Modern Art, Lunch, National Museum of Anthropology, Rebozo Artisan Reception and Expo-Venta at Hotel! (B, L)**

Our day begins at the Museum of Modern Art to see the wonderful permanent collection here, and the masterpiece considered the Mona Lisa of Mexico, "The Two Fridas", by Frida Kahlo. This painting is on a much larger scale than most of her works, which were smaller and considered more intimate. It almost shouts to the world, "I come from two cultures, and this is my dual identity", just as Mexico has two identities and blend of cultures, or "mestizaje". After our viewing, we'll

cross the Reforma Avenue, known as Mexico's Champs Elysees, to enjoy lunch overlooking the Chapultepec Park. We'll end our day viewing special rooms at the National Museum of Anthropology, linking Mexico's ancient, pre-Hispanic past to today's living cultures of Mexico. Evening is at leisure.

### **Day 4:** **Transfer to Puebla, Expo-venta and Overnight (B, L, D)**

We say goodbye to Mexico City and begin our journey East, stopping Puebla, a State rich in cultural traditions and textiles, namely of the Nahua people. We'll tour the highlights of the beautiful city of Puebla, enjoy a traditional lunch, and a highlight will be a special expo-venta from the Nahua women of Hueyapan, Puebla, who will demonstrate their work, using natural dyes and beautifully woven and embroidered shawls and the singular garment called a "tomicoton", seen worn by Frida in the photograph below. The great Master, Teresa Lino will bring special, naturally dyed wool pieces for us to purchase. (B, L)



## ITINERARY

### Day 5: Transfer to Tehuacan and Oaxaca, Mole (B, L, D)

We continue our journey east, stopping in the Nahuatl community of San Gabriel Chilac, where the women still make and wear their beautiful beaded and embroidered blusas. We'll meet with the community, enjoy an herbal cleansing, attend an expo-venta, savor local tamales and atole, before going to the Museo del Agua for a delicious lunch based on the ancient plant, amaranth. After lunch, we'll continue on to Oaxaca, where we'll check in to our hotel, relax and enjoy a welcome to Oaxaca dinner of the famed mole!

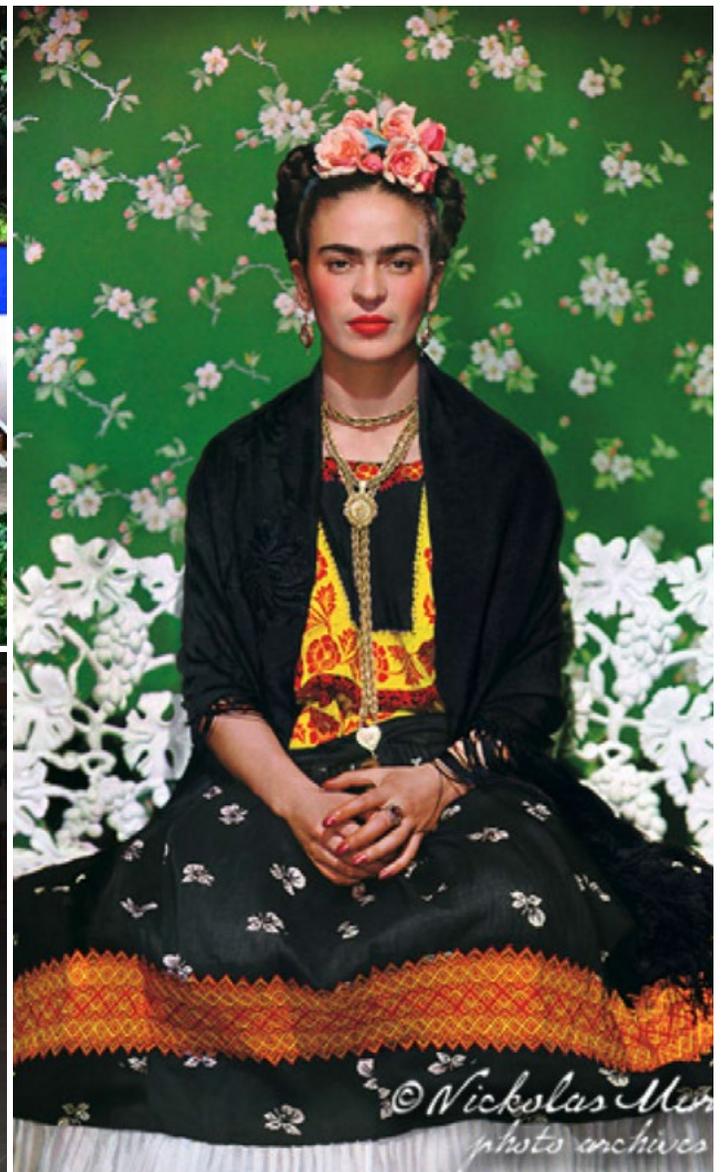
### Day 6: Oaxaca City

Today we'll explore the highlights of Oaxaca City, such as the Textile Museum, cooperatives, art galleries, markets and other points of interest. We'll enjoy a fun regional lunch, leaving the afternoon free for independent exploring.)

### Day 7: Southern Craft Route, Ocotlan (B, L, D)

Today we'll travel in the Southern Valley of Oaxaca's Central Valleys in what is known as "the craft route". We'll begin in Ocotlan, a Zapotec town made famous by beloved painter, Rodolfo Morales. We'll see the buildings and architecture he lovingly

restored with money from the sale of his artwork, we'll visit the "mercado" and make a stop at the famed Aguilar Sisters, who make charming collectable clay figurines in the likes of famous figures and guess who Frida. We'll then stop in San Antonino Castillo Velasco to visit the women who embroider the fine flowers and pansies on the blusas, admired and worn internationally in the 1960's. We stop for a delicious lunch at La Azuzena, visit the backstrap loom weavers of Santo Tomas Jalieza, pay a visit to the Museum of Popular Art of Oaxaca, before returning home to rest and relax before our dinner in Oaxaca City.



## ITINERARY

### Day 8: Isthmus (B, L, Reception)

Today we depart for another land. While still in the State of Oaxaca, traveling to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec is like entering another universe. A matriarchal society, the women are strong, earn the money, control the purse strings and love to spend it on what many women do: their dress. But here, the dress IS their identity. Known as “Istmenas”, the women from the Isthmus wear a cultural passport. By seeing them in the markets, on the streets at home or in any part of the world, they are identified largely through their clothing. Frida’s mother Matilde was from the Isthmus. And, as the dress here is gorgeous, embellished with grand embroidery in hand embroidered flowers (imagery likely of Asian origin), geometric “cadenilla” chain stitch and floral “gancho” or hook technique, Frida loved to don this dress. The elements of the dress or

“traje” consist of a huipil (the top), enredo (or skirt), lace underskirt or “refajo”, a lace head dress called “huipil grande” or “esplendor”. Frida was photographed wearing Istmena dress, and she painted self-portraits of her wearing this dress. It is even featured in her painting, “My Dress Hangs There”, likely a statement of her being caught in the wind, between two worlds, Mexico and the United States, when she and Diego traveled there. Arriving in Tehuantepec, enjoy lunch, check into our hotel and rest, before going to view collection pieces, and to attend a Fashion Show of Regional Dress through time. We’ll close the evening with a dance, to the famed “Zandunga” rhythm, and a closing reception.

### Day 9: Juchitan de Zaragoza (B, L, D)

We’ll travel to nearby Juchitan to meet with artisans who will demonstrate the three primary techniques used to embellish

the beautiful huipiles from the Isthmus; hand embroidery, chain stitch with a machine, and a hook/punch technique. We’ll visit the market to purchase huipiles, traje, hair accessories, jewelry, etc. before returning to the hotel and a fun, casual farewell dinner.

### Day 10: Transfer to Huatulco for Return Flights

Today we transfer to Huatulco for return flights or to stay an extra night of a few days to rest on the beaches of the Pacific Coast of Mexico.vv