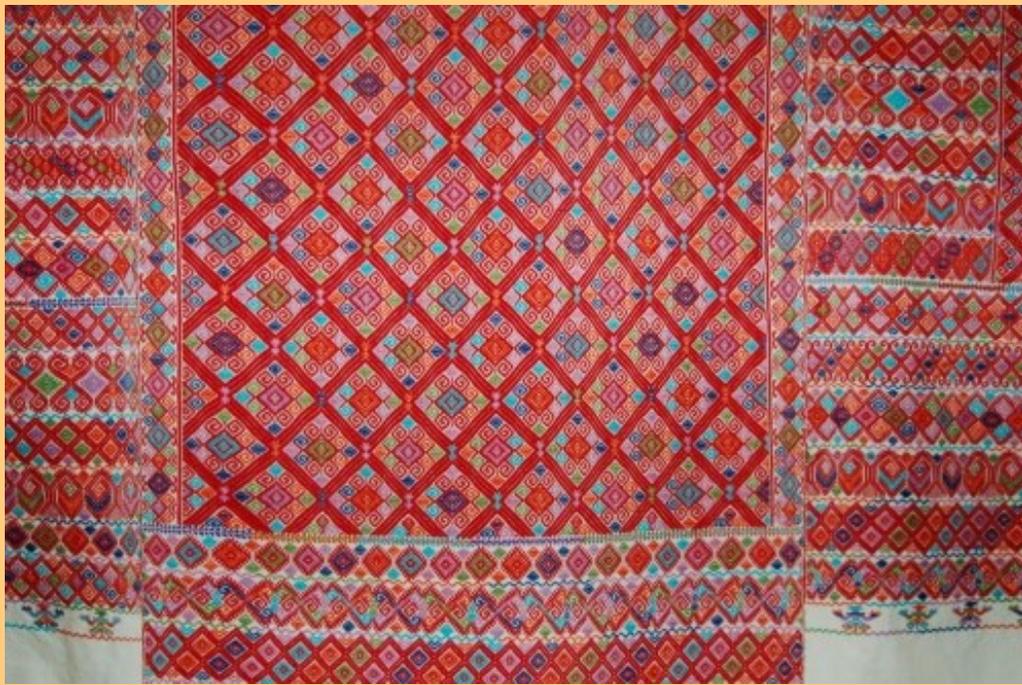


Maya Textile Traditions of The Chiapas Highlands

Tia Stephanie Tours

Cultural Journeys to Mexico



Summary

On this journey of learning and discovery, we visit the Chiapas highlands to learn about the rich textile traditions as cultural expressions of the Highland Maya people of Chiapas. Based out of San Cristobal de Las Casas, we will make daily visits to surrounding Tzotzil and Tzeltal communities such as, Chamula, Zinacantan, Tenejapa, Cancuc, Magdalena, Larrainzar, Chenalho, Venustiano Carranza, Amatenango, Aguacatenango to learn of motif, cosmology of the highland Maya, as they express their inner beliefs on cloth and identify themselves to the world through their unique community dress.

Trip Includes:

- Accommodations
- Expert Guides and/or Academics
- Comfortable / Secure Transportation
- Welcome and Farewell Dinners
- Breakfasts
- Meals according to itinerary
- Water on Van/Coach
- Airport Transfers
- Entry Fees



Trip Highlights

- Learn of Maya cosmology, design motifs and text used in weavings
- Travel to the Highland Villages to meet the weavers and learn of their traditions and techniques
- Understand how dress is a “cultural passport” and identifier for the women and men of their communities
- Visit the most important Tzotzil and Tzeltal Maya communities of the Chiapas Highlands
- Visit cooperatives to understand how they are organized
- Purchase collector quality textiles of the Chiapas Highlands
- Visit the Centro de Textiles del Mundo Maya, the most important museum of its kind to see the Collection, the Research and Conservation Labs
- Explore the Museum at Na Bolom and learn about Trudy and Franz Blom and their work with the Lacandon Maya.
- Explore the streets of San Cristobal de Las Casas



Itinerary

Day One: Saturday, Arrive Tuxtla Gutierrez, Transfer to San Cristobal de Las Casas (D)

Arrive Tuxtla Gutierrez, where you will be transferred to our centrally located and charming hotel in the colonial city of San Cristobal de las Casas, named after Bartolome de las Casas, who was known as the "conscience of the conquest", as he admonished the Spanish monarchy to change their attitudes and behavior towards the indigenous population. San Cristobal sits at 7,000 feet, and the air is clear and light. We enjoy a welcome dinner at a local favorite restaurant!

Day Two: Sunday, San Juan Chamula & Zinacantan (B, L)

Today is market day in Chamula! In addition to the market, we will experience the indigenous church of San Juan, where they Maya cosmivision of this Tzotzil community is revealed. Healing ceremonies take place to heal the infirm and drive out bad spirits. This church is like any other, with pine needles and candles on the floor as the community members pray to the respective saints, with the help of a "healer". In Chamula we will also learn about the importance of sheep, as members of the family and we will learn how the women's woolen skirt is made. In Zinacantan, flowers are seen everywhere; from the embroidered smocks worn by the women and men, to the cultivated variety. Returning to San Cristobal, the evening is free to explore the bohemian atmosphere of San Cristobal de Las Casas.

Day Three: Monday, Amatenango & Aguacatenango (B, L)

Today we learn about the textile and pottery traditions in Amatenango and Aguacatenango. We visit Mari and Albertina, master potters who will show us their techniques and materials that date back to the pre-Hispanic era. We will learn of the unique dress that identifies women from Amatenango, a form of cultural passport, recognized throughout the region. Lunch at La Diligencia. In the afternoon we take a walking tour of San Cristobal to review motifs and iconography in surrounding architecture. We will also visit select weaving coops and textile shops. Dinner is in town.

Day Four: Tuesday, Venustiano Carranza (B, L)

After breakfast, we depart for the community of Venustiano Carranza, in the tropical midland region. The cotton backstrap woven blouses here are very light and gauze like, as the region is hot. We will visit homes of master weavers to see this delicate weaving style. From here we visit the Chiflon waterfalls; a

Day Five: Wednesday, Larrainzar & Magdalenas (B, L)

Today we focus on the text and iconography in the Maya weaving of Magdalenas and San Andres Larrainzar and Magdalenas. We will learn of the Ceremonial huipil from Magdalenas and the layers of text and meaning of the woven designs and the form of the huipil, itself. Omnipresent in the Maya iconography are themes of underworld, material world and celestial world (3 planes), the elements (earth, wind, fire and water), and the cardinal points. Also, humankind's relationship to the outer world is always present.

Day Six: Thursday, Tenejapa & Cancuc (B, L)

In addition to visiting the Thursday market in Tenejapa we will visit a special coop that produces extraordinary examples of weaving technique and designs of this Tzeltal weaving community.

Day Seven: Friday, Chenalho & Free Afternoon in San Cristobal (B, D)

On our last day, we will visit the community of Chenalho that has yet another very unique and distinctive style and technique. We will meet with coops that are working with contemporary designers. Returning to San Cristobal we enjoy our Farewell Dinner!

Day Eight: Saturday, Return Flights or:

Extend to the Chiapas Lowland region to visit the Classic Period Maya Sites of Palenque, Bonampak and Yaxchilan.

NOTE: Other highlights we will visit in San Cristobal in the afternoons include:

- **Centro de Textiles Mundo Maya**
- **Sna Jolobil Coop & Cooperatives**
- **Sergio Castro Museum of Dress**

For more information:

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- **Na Bolom Museum**

