



ANCIENT KINGDOMS OF THE MAYA

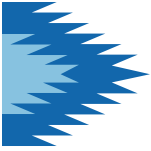
EXTENSION: CHIAPAS HIGHLANDS: SAN CRISTOBAL DE
LAS CASAS HIGHLAND MAYA COMMUNITIES.

December 29, 2017-January 10, 2018
Prepared for Ronald Wixman

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Cultural Journeys

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ANCIENT KINGDOMS OF THE MAYA!

ART HISTORY OF MEXICO

Join us on a journey to explore the ancient and living Maya of Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico! We'll visit the former powerful Kingdoms of Tikal and Palenque and important satellite communities such as Quirigua, Yaxchilan, Bonampak and others. In addition to learning about the Ancient Maya, we'll visit living Maya communities in the Guatemala highlands, around Antigua and Lake Atitlan. This educational journey promises to be rich in historical perspectives and understanding of the Maya civilization; its legacy and living cultures of today.

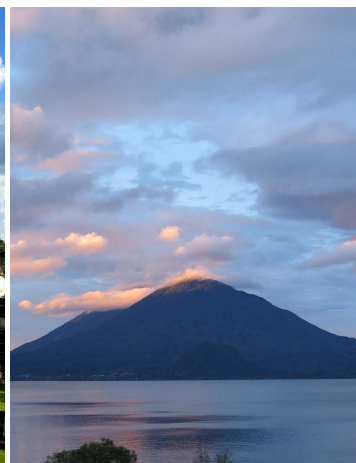


PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Guatemala City: Museum of History and the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology
- handcrafts and ethnographic textiles of Guatemala
- Overnight in Lake Atitlan
- Museum in Copan, Honduras
- We'll visit Yaxha Archaeological Site
- We'll visit the Usumacinta River
- We'll visit Palenque

LOCATION





ITINERARY

Day 1:

Friday, Dec. 29: Arrive Guatemala (D)

Arrive at Guatemala City Airport, where you will be met and transferred to our hotel in Guatemala City. We'll enjoy a meet and greet welcome dinner! Overnight, Guatemala City. WESTIN Camino Real .

Day 2:

Saturday, Dec. 30: Guatemala City, Iximche, Transfer Chichicastenango (B, L)

This morning, we'll visit the most important museums in Guatemala City, beginning with the Ixchel Museum of Maya Textiles. Here, we'll learn of the vast and diverse cultural landscape of the Maya of Guatemala, and how dress and textile traditions are an integral aspect of their cultural expression. Nearby, we'll visit the Popol Vuh Museum of History and the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. At these museums, we'll learn of the Maya ancient past and their legacy. In the afternoon, we'll transfer to Chichicastenango, but will make a strategic stop en route to visit the Iximche Archaeological Site, a late Post Classic Maya Site, built in 1470 and destroyed by the Spanish conquistadores in 1524. While it was destroyed, it was never truly lost nor forgotten by the Maya Cackchiquel people,

for whom it is still a sacred place. By visiting this site, we will gain access to observe a serene Maya healing ritual performed by a qualified community shamaness. Arriving to "Chichi" on the eve of a market day provides the opportunity to see the transformation of a normally quiet town in to a bustling market. It happens overnight. Overnight in Chichicastenango. Mayan Inn

Day 3: Sunday, Dec. 31: Chichicastenango Sunday Market! (B, L, D)

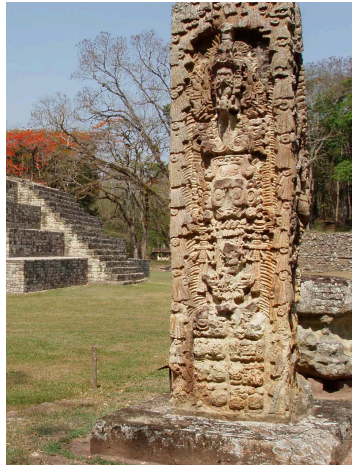
No place is more colorful and vibrant than Chichicastenango during its Sunday market. Here, handcrafts and ethnographic textiles are bought and sold by venders from all over the country, representing numerous ethnic groups of Guatemala. In addition to the dynamic market day, we can observe how the Maya worship in a syncretic manner, observing their ancient Maya gods, within the Saint Thomas Catholic Church. Tonight is New Year's Eve and it will be celebrated with a special Dinner. Overnight in Lake Atitlan. 2 nights at the Posada Don Rodrigo Hotel in Lake Atitlan.

Day 4: Monday, January 1: Lake Atitlan Communities (B, L)

Located at 5,000 feet above sea level, Lake Atitlan is surrounded by three imposing volcanoes and a dozen Maya villages. Lake Atitlan is magical to behold and explore. Traveling by boat, we'll visit the most picturesque towns of the Maya Tzutuhil People: Santiago and San Juan, on the Southwestern side of the lake, on the slopes of three volcanoes. Textiles, wood carvings, primitive art paintings abound here, and the vibrant Maya culture is fully alive. Overnight in Lake Atitlan.

Day 5: Tuesday, January 2, Antigua - Guatemala City (B, L)

This morning we'll transfer to Antigua. At 5,000 feet, surrounded by three volcanoes, Antigua is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and is an excellent example of a Spanish colonial city from the 18th Century, in the afternoon we'll walk the cobblestoned streets, visiting plazas, fountains, churches, convents and palaces of charming Antigua. Antigua an excellent example of a Spanish colonial city built in the 18th Century. In the late afternoon, 45-minute transfer to Guatemala City. Overnight in Guatemala City, Vista Real Hotel.



ITINERARY

Day 6:

Wednesday, Jan. 3: Copan, Honduras.

Today we'll depart early, and enjoy a scenic morning drive to Copan in Honduras. We'll spend the afternoon exploring the Copan Archaeological Site and its remarkable on-site Museum, where we'll see the most intricate carvings, inscriptions and art on the walls and monuments of the Maya World. It is a well-deserved UNESCO World Heritage Site. We'll overnight in Copan, Clarion Copan Hotel. (B,L)

Day 7: Thursday, Jan. 4: Copan - Quirigua - Rio Dulce

Today, we transfer back to Guatemala, to visit Quirigua Archeological Site, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. For most of its history, Quirigua was a province under Copan, until a Quirigua King killed the Copan King. Such was life in the Maya World! Quirigua is famous for its enormous carved stones or stelae. One of them shows the glyphs with the Date of Creation: 13.0.0.0.0 - August 13th 3114 BC! We'll enjoy the

afternoon & overnight by Rio Dulce, in a waterfront hotel. Banana Palms Resort and Marina. (B,L)

Day 8: Friday, Jan. 5: Transfer to Flores

Before we leave Rio Dulce, a boat will come to the hotel pier for a nice ride for the best sights of the San Felipe Fortress, built in the 15th Century by the Spanish authorities, to prevent the attacks from British and Dutch Pirates. It is one chain of fortresses built by the Spanish Kingdom around the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Colonies. Arriving in Flores, there will be time to enjoy the charming town built in an island in Lake Peten Itza, destroying the last Maya Capital as late as 1690. Overnight in Flores. 2 nights at the Camino Real Tikal Hotel. (B,L)

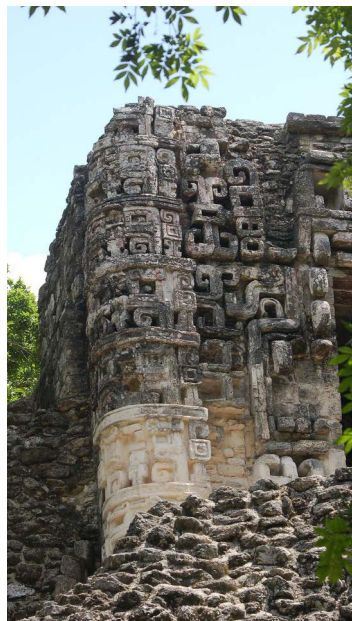
Day 9: Saturday, Jan. 6: Tikal

In order to fully immerse in this space and place, we will spend a full day at Tikal. Located within the Maya Biosphere Reserve,

Tikal is one of the few places in the World that deserve UNESCO's World Heritage recognition for both its cultural and natural wealth. Tikal reached its zenith in the 7th Century, at the peak of the Classic Maya period. Overnight in Flores. (B,L)

Day 10: Sunday, Jan. 7: Yaxha Site - Transfer to Frontera Corozal

In the morning, we'll visit Yaxha Archaeological Site, in an impressive jungle setting, on the shores of a lake. As fewer people visit this site, this will provide us with excellent viewing opportunities to see the flora and fauna of this region. Birds are of particular interest! In the afternoon, we'll transfer to the Usumacinta River, the largest river in the region and an ancient Maya trade route. We'll overnight in a lodge by the river, at Frontera Corozal, a town that is managed and run by the Lacandon Maya. (B,L)



ITINERARY

Day 11:

Monday, Jan. 8: Yaxchilan (B, L)

This morning, we'll hop on our "lanchas" and take a river boat ride on the Usumacinta River to visit Yaxchilan, famous for its carved lintels. Again, we'll see how the rivers of this region, and in particular the Usumacinta, provided strategic locations to control the trade of the region. Rivers were the key for access to commerce, wealth and power. We'll make our way to Palenque, but not without stopping first at Bonampak, famed for their mural cycle that depicts warfare and Maya dress. Arriving in Palenque, we'll settle into our hotel, and enjoy a fun dinner! 2 nights at the Villas Kin Ha Hotel.

Day 12:

Tuesday, Jan. 9: Palenque (B, L, D)

Today is dedicated to visiting the once powerful Maya kingdom of the Classic period, Palenque. Under the rule of King Pakal, Palenque became an important power center, along with Tikal and Calakmul.

The Maya were in a continuous struggle for power and domination, for resource control. As such, the alliances and rivalries were strategic and dynamic; often secured via inter-marriage. Demonstrating royal lineage was also a key strategy employed to justify one's claim to ascension and dominance. Also an UNESCO World Heritage site, the Pyramid of the Inscriptions, houses the tomb for King Pakal and his glorious sarcophagus. A full size replica can be seen at the on-site museum, and is one of its highlights! We'll have some time to visit Palenque Town.

Extension: Chiapas Highlands: San Cristobal de Las Casas Highland Maya Communities

Day 13: Wednesday, Jan. 10, Transfer to San Cristobal de Las Casas

City Tour and Banamex Museum of Maya Textiles

Day 14: Thursday, Tenejapa (Market Day) Visit Tenejapa, Market Day

Visit Cancuk, Beautiful remote village with lovely textiles

Day 15: Friday, Pottery and Gauze Textiles. Amatenango Pottery Venustiano Carranza

Day 16: Saturday, Highland Communities. Magdalenas Larrazar

Day 16: Sunday, Chamula and Zinacantan.