

# Mayan Expedition 3 | An Encounter with the Mayan Heritage

Yucatan Private Tour



The Mayan Culture reigned on the Yucatan Peninsula, on the Southeastern side of Mexico, enclosed by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. It was in this area, where the Mayans reached their Superior degree of development. Nonetheless Mayan Civilization covered a vast extension, from Mexico's Southern Pacific Coast, way in to Central America. Traces of Maya nomad settlements go back to 1500 BC. We distinguish mainly 3 Mayan periods of Social and Urban development: Nomad, Mayan Pre Classical and Mayan Classical. These Periods are relatively evident in their building techniques, their carved inscriptions on their Pyramids, buildings and temples. Mayans developed a structure of writing, using hieroglyphs; and so kept record of Mayan findings in mathematics, Architecture and Astronomy.

## Day 1: Cancún

Arrival in Cancún, transfer to hotel and overnight stay



## Day 2: Cancún

Cancún – Valladolid – Ek Balam - Merida

We start your encounter with The Mayan Heritage early in the morning with a 2 hour transit from Cancun to Valladolid, the second largest City of the State of Yucatan. Valladolid is a Colonial City which has kept up Architectonical design and tradition. Valladolid Central Square and main Church are a very interesting site, in addition to the harmony that the City keeps with its past heritage. Valladolid was founded in 1543. We will then take you 22 kilometers north to a very instructful visit to Ek Balam Archeological Site and Maya Sacred City. Ek Balam is is one of the last Mayan cities to be discovered; its name means the "Jaguar Star". The emplacement displays monumental Maya-Toltec architecture, walls, stalls and so-called hieroglyphics. Serpents and statues are skillfully carved from blocks of stone. In the afternoon we will do another transit just slightly over 2 hours, to reach Merida, our overnight destination.

Merida is the Capital of the State of Yucatan. Merida has preserved its Colonial Heritage in the Historic District of the Town. It is the Center of the State and all the roads converge at the State Capital. Merida's Central Square or "Plaza Grande" is surrounded by ancient buildings that form the Historic District such as The San Idelfonso Cathedral of Merida, the most antique church of the American Continent, built in the second half of the XVIth Century. You can also see the 16th Century Palace that was built for Conqueror Montejo, large avenues, tradition and folklore.



## Day 3: Merida

The Yucatan Peninsula is a privileged territory fruitfully blessed by Nature. Most part of the Peninsula is covered by Biodiversity Reserve areas where the Jungle and the evergreen Tropical Forest, seem like a replica of the Garden of Eden. The Maya respectful relationship with Nature preserved these impressive ecological settings, which are a Natural Paradise in the midst of the 21st Century. On this third day you will visit one of the most beautiful areas provided by Nature. We will drive from Merida to Celestun a Bird Sanctuary with almost 100 different species, where you will see what will seem like a Pink Color Lake which is the Flamingo home of origin and Habitat. We will tour the lagoon on a small motor boat and will have a chance for a nice swim. In the afternoon we will return to Merida where you will be able to visit the different districts of the City with their Spanish and French influence, and very especially the impressive Colonial Heritage.



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## Day 4: Merida

### Merida - Uxmal

We will leave Merida for a visit of Colonial towns and see Churches that the Spanish missionaries built to counterattack the Pre-Columbus Mayan religious beliefs. Villages and towns that we will visit are Mani, the place where Mayan idols and books were destroyed in times of the conquest. We will also visit Ticul the City of clay and leather manufacturers. In the evening we will attend the Light & Sound Show at Uxmal. Overnight at Uxmal.



## Day 5: Uxmal

### Uxmal – Kabah – Chichén Itza

We will be sightseeing in the early morning with a visit of Uxmal and Kabah. These two Archeological sites are part of the "Puuc Region", characterized by the prominence of "Chaac", the rain god, who is venerated, cherished and evoked through the magical repetition of his image. Uxmal, the three times built city of the Mayas is on the southern lands of Yucatan. The architecture of Uxmal is among the most majestic in Yucatan. Its beauty is characterized by low and horizontal palaces placed around patios and quadrants richly decorated with detailed sculptures. You will see. The Governor's house and the temple of the wizard, both considered architectonic jewels due to their precise construction and beauty. We will continue to Izamal a picturesque colonial city where time seems to have stopped. The city's convent has the second largest atrium around the world, after the one at St. Peters in the Vatican. The first missionary convent in Mexico was built in Izamal as the City was founded just after 1542. From Izamal we will go for an evening Light and Sound Show at Chichen Itza. Overnight in Chichen Itza.



## Day 6: Chichen Itza

### Chichen Itza - Cancun

An early morning visit to the site of Chichen Itza will start our day. Chichen Itza was the Mayan Post Classic Sacred City, which represents the most intact and impressive of the heritage of the Mayan Civilization that the modern world preserves. Chichen Itza means "The Mouth of the Well". Chichen Itza has a huge "Cenote", a big pond nourished by underground rivers, which supplied clean water to the complex. Chichen Itza, as other Mayan Centers was originally a ceremonial and spiritual site, instead of a commercial area. Chichen Itza has outstanding constructions such as the impressive Castle or Pyramid of Kukucan, which is a living illustration of the advanced civilization that was achieved at this settlement. You will also see the Ball Court, the astrological observatory and the very impressive sacred well. Then we will ride back to Cancun with your final delivery at your chosen hotel.



## Included Services

- » Welcome meeting at Cancun Airport by our representatives
- » 1 night accommodation in Cancun
- » Transportation in air conditioned vehicles
- » English speaking guide during the days of the tour. Other languages on request.
- » Accommodation in the below mentioned and locally rated hotels with breakfast included
- » Visits mentioned in the itinerary, including entrances fees to the archaeological sites
- » Local taxes in hotels
- » Transfer Airport – Hotel on arrival date.

## Not Included Services

- » Meals not previously mentioned
- » Gratuities in Hotels
- » Tips during the excursions (for the Tour Guide and Bus driver)

## Hotels

- » Cancún: Oasis America 4\*, Radisson Hacienda Cancún 5\* or similar
- » Merida: Hotel Los Aluxes 4\*, El Castellano 5\*, El Conquistador 5\* or similar
- » Uxmal: Mision Uxmal 4\* or similar
- » Chichén Itza: Posada Chichén 3\*, Mayaland 4\* or similar

