Mexico

Mexico is a fascinating experience characterised by deep-rooted traditions, bustling colonial cities, sleepy villages and the stunning archaeological sites of the Maya and the Aztecs. Huge, historical, local, musical, overwhelming, intimate, Mexico is a land of spectacular contrasts. From ancient pyramids to modern skyscrapers, from lively music street vendors, serene parks and vibrant street life. The historic heart of the city is the enormous Zocalo square - which is one of the largest plazas in the world. It is surrounded by the presidential palace and cathedral. The Condesa and Roma districts are firmly established as trendy nightlife zones. About 50 km north-east of Mexico city is the impressive archaeological site of Tepotzotlan.

At a glance
- Possible to visit all year round (July and August, mid-December - early January are high season). Easter and Day of the Dead (early November) are also busy.
- Internal flights are required to maximise time.
- Mexico city - a large metropolis founded by the Aztecs.
- Stunnning archaeological sites and pyramids.
- El Tajin - Chingazing UNESCO World Heritage sites such as Oaxaca and Campeche.
- Caribbean beaches - cool reefs, endless sand and turquoise water.
- Copper Canyon - one of the world's greatest train journeys.
- Vibrant arts, music and dance scene.

Getting there
Direct flight from London Heathrow to Mexico city with Aeromexico. There are also flights from London Heathrow to Mexico with KLM (via Amsterdam), Air France (via Paris), Iberia (via Madrid) and Lufthansa (via Frankfurt). There are also flights from London Heathrow with United (via Houston) and American Airlines (via Miami). Several regional departures are from London Heathrow to Mexico city with Aeromexico. There are flights from London Gatwick to Cancun. Direct flight from London Heathrow to Mexico city with British Airways.

Combinations
Mexico combines particularly well with Guatemala.

Mexico City

Mexico City is a capital of epic proportions and boasts a fascinating mix of interesting museums, excellent restaurants, delightful squares, lively music, street vendors, serene parks and vibrant street life. The historic heart of the city is the enormous Zocalo square - which is one of the largest plazas in the world. It is surrounded by the presidential palace and cathedral. The Condesa and Roma districts are firmly established as trendy nightlife zones.

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Oaxaca

Oaxaca is a delightful colonial city sprinkled with old stone buildings, fabulous arts and crafts, interesting galleries, fine archaeological sites, forested mountains and bustling indigenous markets. The main traffic-free plaza is the hub of the city, brimming with interesting scenes and atmosphere.

At a glance
- Exciting, charming, UNESCO World Heritage sites such as Oaxaca and Campeche.
- Caribbean beaches - cool reefs, endless sand and turquoise water.
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Chiapas

The rural state of Chiapas is a real gem, located in the southernmost corner of Mexico. It is blessed with lush jungles that surround soaring Mayan ruins and waterfalls. The indigenous residents shun modern fashion in favour of ponchos and traditional dress. At the heart of Chiapas lies the beautiful colonial highland town of San Cristóbal de las Casas. It is a pleasure to explore its cobbled streets and markets. The jungle-enshrouded site of Palenque is arguably the most romantic and impressive of all the ancient Mayan cities. The soaring but graceful pyramids are crowned with temples that glow in the tropical sun. The ruins and surrounding forest form a national park.

Our Top Tips

- The steep-walled Sumidero canyon (close to San Cristóbal) is a haven for wildlife best explored by boat.
- The striking waterfalls of Agua Azul and Misol-Ha can be visited en route to Palenque.
- Other recommended sites in Chiapas are Yaxchilan, Bonampak and Tonina.

Yucatán Peninsula

Yucatán is a region which boasts a number of impressive archaeological sites including the soaring temples at Chichén Itzá, Kabah, Uxmal and Coba. Campeche has wonderfully-restored colonial buildings and it is a real delight to wander around its UNESCO city. Merida is a charming city with artistic roots. It features a stunning cathedral, mansions and elegant properties dating from the 17th century. Celestún reserve is located 60 miles west of Merida. Take a boat trip on the estuary and mangrove forests. The Riviera Maya is the coastline between Cancun and Tulum, with its white-sand beaches and turquoise waters. The commercial city of Playa Carmen offers a wide range of waterports as well as a selection of restaurants, cafes and bars.

Hacienda Puerta Campeche

Campeche

This delightful hotel is an oasis in the heart of Campeche. All rooms are elegantly decorated and they have a safe deposit box, TV and air-conditioning. The stylish restaurant offers both indoor and outdoor dining. A swimming pool snakes through the property. There are hammocks dotted around the gardens. There is a jacuzzi, spa and rooftop bar. A long-standing Sunvil favourite.

For additional lodges, itineraries and general information on Mexico please visit www.sunvil.co.uk

Palenque

San Cristóbal de las Casas

Chiapas

Casa Vieja

San Cristóbal de las Casas

This rustic property is set in a 18th century house with lots of paintings and old-world ambience. The 40 en-suite rooms situated around a courtyard feature beams, adobe walls and hand-painted bathroom tiles. There is a restaurant serving traditional Mexican dishes.

Quinta Chamonal

Palenque

Set in tropical gardens approximately 3 miles from the ruins. It has 7 suites with terracotta stone floors, antique furnitures, TV, air-conditioning, fan, WR, hairdryer, safe deposit box and a balcony. The restaurant offers an intimate and romantic setting for a candlelit dinner. The beautiful grounds are abundant with wildlife such as iguanas and hummingbirds. There is a swimming pool and spa.

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(approximately 2 hours from Cancun to the port).

**OUR TOP TIPS**

- **Hacienda Merida**
  - Merida
  - An elegant boutique hotel located just a few blocks from the main square. The pool and attractive gardens provide a haven of peace and relaxation. There are 8 spacious and well-appointed en suite rooms with air-conditioning, fan and TV. There is a spa and small bar (no restaurant). They have a sister hotel VIP next door.

- **Mahekal Beach Resort**
  - Playa del Carmen
  - This beachfront hotel is close to the heart of Playa del Carmen. It has 121 rooms in a range of categories spread throughout its grounds. All rooms have hammocks, terrace (or balcony) and air-conditioning. It has extensive facilities including two pools, games room, bar, 2 restaurants, spa, dive centre and shop. A comfortable resort style hotel that welcomes families.

**Suggested itineraries**

Please find some suggested itineraries which can be tailored to suit individual requirements. They are simply examples of what is feasible within different timeframes. There are additional itineraries on our website if you wish to order further guidance. They are aimed at individual travellers (NOT group escorted tours). Tours include an English speaking guide. Prices are a guideline only - please contact us for an exact quote. Please note that we are able to quote for land only arrangements (no flights) but we require a minimum of 7 nights.

**Classic Mexico - 14 nights**

Based on British Airways direct flight

Day 1:
- Upon arrival in Mexico city transfer to Hotel La Casarina for 2 nights.
- Day 2: Half-day guided city tour including the wonderful Museum of Anthropology.
- Day 3: Transfer to airport fly to Oaxaca, transfer to hotel Casa Casavieja for 3 nights.
- Day 4: Half-day guided tour to Monte Alban • a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Day 5: Full day at leisure.
- Day 6: Transfer to Oaxaca airport fly to Tuxtla Gutierrez. Take a boat ride through the Sumidero Canyon. Continue to San Cristobal de las Casas. Evening visit to the Palenque Ruins and the Cenote Tanzil. Stay at the Quinta Chanabnal view room.
- Day 7: Half-day guided tour of Palenque, one of the most important Mayan sites set amid dense green jungle.
- Day 8: To travel to Tuxtla. Stay at the Hacienda Mérida for 3 nights.
- Day 9: Full day guided tour to Celestun – famed as one of the largest breeding grounds of pink flamingos.
- Day 10: Transfer to Playa del Carmen • a UNESCO World Heritage site. Stay at the Mahekal Beach Resort for 4 nights (garden view room).
- Day 11: A full-day guided trip to the most spectacular and important sites of Mayan culture.
- Day 12: Centrally to the charming city of Mérida, travel to Hacienda Mérida for 3 nights.
- Day 13: A full day guided tour of the ancient Mayan city including lunch – Chichén Itzá.
- Day 14: Full day at leisure to explore this magnificent archaeological site Hacienda Ochil for 2 nights.
- Day 15: Transfer to Cancun airport for your return flight to the UK.

**Yucatan Natural Wonders - 11 nights**

Based on British Airways direct flight

Guide price per person (2 sharing) £2,645

- £1,593
- £1,562
- £1,241
- £865

**Guide prices include**

- International economy return flights from the UK (see the itinerary for specific airline details).
- Accommodation - standard room unless stated otherwise.
- Private transfers and tours (unless indicated otherwise).
- Internal flights (as featured in the itinerary).
- Meals (as outlined in the itinerary).

**Board base key**

- BB: Bed and Breakfast
- HB: Half-Board
- FB: Full-Board
- AB: All inclusive

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