

YUCATAN

TRAVEL GUIDE



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YUCATÁN

www.yucatan.travel

Yucatán has it all

Yucatan is a magical land, a perfect fusion of past and present. The traveler can find a whole range of possibilities: eternal stories and wonders, friendly people and traditions, but at the same time Yucatan offers modern infrastructure, industry and an important port-of-call.

With a fascinating cuisine, a mixture of ancient Mayan recipes and Creole influence opens an almost infinite range of choices for everyone. This is a place where it is easy to get lost among the bird songs and music of the trova, a special type of romantic ballads. Yucatan offers diverse experiences full of colors, history, museums, and convention centers.

The state has important Maya ruins, such as the amazing Chichen Itza, the monumental Uxmal and the mystic Ek Balam, all wonders of the world. In addition, it also has beautiful colonial cities, architectural jewels reflecting the perfect fusion of two cultures.

The natural beauty and magic of Yucatán will captivate you, with tropical forests and mysterious cenotes or sinkholes, underwater caves created by Chicxulub meteorite impact (65 million years ago).

The Haciendas (estates) are proud witnesses of the past. Born in the Era of "Green Gold" (late 1800s), the haciendas lived by the henequen boom.

However the henequen industry plummeted in the mid- 1940s with the invention of synthetic fibers, and with it the splendor of these plantations. In the last decade of the 20th Century the Haciendas of Yucatan recovered a great part of their earlier splendor, becoming a perfect place for harmony and relaxation in and elegant comfort.

Everything from its people to its architecture reflects a colorful heritage and an amalgamated culture (Maya and Spanish). The handicrafts are a unique creation of expertise and experience; you can find huipiles (traditional embroidered dresses), detailed carvings of ancient Mayan sculptures, the finest hammocks in the world, and the famous "guayabera" shirts for men.

Yucatan is a complete tourist destination; it has the highest rated infrastructure for events, conventions and incentive trips in the country, founded on the high quality of its tourism services, excellent highway communications and the natural and historical wonders that this destination has to offer.

The Yucatán Peninsula is hot and humid. The rainy season is mid-August to mid-October, with afternoon showers most days. Its climate is very similar to Miami or Cuba. The best time to visit is during the dryer, slightly cooler months between November and March. The average annual high temperature is 33°C (91°F), but temperatures often rise above 38°C (100°F) during the summer. Low temperatures range between 18°C (64°F) in January to 23°C (73°F) in May and June.

Splendid haciendas, Mayan archeological sites, cenotes, caves and many more tourist attractions surround Mérida.





Casa Montejo

Mérida

Mérida is one of Mexico's most important colonial cities, an architectural jewel traditionally known as "La Ciudad Blanca" (The White City). The Mayan World with the generous hospitality of its people surrounds it. It features traditional neighborhoods, tree-lined stately avenues, world class services, varied cuisine, night life and modern installations which guarantee your business success as well as an indelible memory of a unique experience.

Mérida has become the "Medical Capital of the South-east Mexico" with a vast network of hospitals, clinics, laboratories as well as private and public doctor's offices; the health care in the city is excellent and very affordable. Many doctors are English-speaking, often having done their training in the United States; the facilities are state of the art but cost less.

Every Sunday there is a festival of colors, smells and sounds in the main plaza and the Hidalgo, Santa Lucia, de la Madre and Americas Parks, where several musicians serenade the public with a variety of famous Yucatan folk songs.

At nights, Mérida can be a fascinating experience riding on a four-wheeled calash, open-air cafés, restaurants, serenades, concerts and nightlife.

What to see in Mérida ?

Paseo Montejo

Paseo Montejo – Designed to emulate the Champs Elysees, it will delight the visitors with its three story mansions with their balconies, harmonious lines, vivid color and pointed tower. Along this avenue stand some of the oldest and most beautiful constructions in the city like: Casas Gemelas, Casa Peón del Minarete, Casa Peón de Regil, Casa Vales, and la Quinta Montes Molina. The last one is open to public and displays lams, mirrors, paintings, furniture, limoges, chine and sculptures, among other things.

Palacio Cantón – It was built from 1904 to 1911. Is one of the most beautiful buildings in the city, presently houses the Museum of Anthropology and History, with an exhibition of important pieces of the Mayan culture. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 to 20:00 hrs and Sunday from 8:00 to 14:00 hrs.

A monument to Justo Sierra and Felipe Carrillo Puerto - The first statue in Paseo Montejo was placed in honor of Dr. Justo Sierra O'Reilly in 1906. Two decades later, in 1926, another monument was placed honoring Felipe Carrillo Puerto, founder of the Socialist Workers' Party of Yucatán and governor of the state in 1922.

Monumento a la Patria (Monument to the Fatherland) - It is the only monument carved directly in the stone in the whole world. The 14-meter high (45.93 ft.) statue faces due south along the Paseo. The Colombian artist Rómulo Rozo created it. Numerous symbols representing the pre-Hispanic past are carved on this colossus. The columns represent the different states of Mexico.



Palacio Cantón



What to see in Mérida ?

Plaza Principal (Main Plaza)

Palacio de Gobierno (State Government Building) – It is a nice example of the early 20th century with an eclectic style blending some elements of classical architecture. Inside, the outstanding feature is a large courtyard. This neo-classical building houses 27 large murals by Yucatecan artist Fernando Castro Pacheco with scenes from Maya and Mexican history. Open daily from 8:00 to 21:00 hrs.

Cathedral – It is the oldest cathedral on the American continent. It was built 19 years after the founding of Mérida, in 1561. Designed in the somber Renaissance style by an architect who had worked on the Escorial in Madrid, its facade is stark and unadorned. The towers have a Moorish style. Inside, the black Cristo de las Ampollas (Christ of the Blisters) is 23 feet tall, the tallest Christ in Mexico inside a church. The Cathedral displays baroque altarpieces.

Casa de Montejo (House of Montejo) - Built between 1543 and 1549 by the founder of the city, Francisco de Montejo. Its façade stands out for its stone engravings in the Spanish plateresque architectural style, a jewel of the plateresque style.

Plaza Grande – The plaza is a comfortable and informal place to gather with friends. The park is full of trees and picturesque benches. Mérida's oldest buildings, beautiful in their scale and composition, surround the square.

Palacio Municipal (City Hall) - Built in 1735, was used as granary and jail. There is a coat decorating the wall of the staircase, this is the oldest in the city. The high wall in the backyard is a vestige of the Mayan pyramid Chaam Baklum. Every Monday at 21:00 hrs, a folkloric ballet performs the typical "vaquerias" along the portals.

Centro Cultural Olimpo – A large, modern building that hosts art exhibits, films, and lectures. It houses the Arcadio Poveda Ricalde Planetarium, where visitors can enjoy fascinating journeys into the Cosmos. Open from Tuesday to Sunday.

Teatro Daniel Ayala (Theater) - Constructed in a big house built during the 17th century. In 1987 the property was restored and new services and facilities were included. Since then it is used as an artistic and cultural arena, presenting theater, as well as dance and music shows.

Parque Hidalgo – It is the second most important park in the city. Small outdoor restaurants lined in front of the park. It is a nice place to buy some crafts and watch the craftspeople at work.

Teatro Mérida (Theater) – It houses three state of the art venues: the Sala Principal, which holds 1,200 spectators; the Cineteca, with a 227-seat capacity; and the Sala de Arte (Art room), for 101 people.

Templo de Jesús de la Tercera Orden (the Third Order Church) - A 17th century church, a real jewel of the baroque architecture. It has the richest interior of any church in Mérida, there are beautiful fresco paintings depicting biblical scenes. On the other side of the church is the Parque de la Madre (Mother's Park), with a copy of Renoir's statue of the Madonna and Child.

What to see in Mérida ?

Plaza Principal (Main Plaza)

Teatro Peón Contreras (Theater) - Built in 1908, with its white marble stairs, and its seats decorated in a Rococo-style. Today it is the most important cultural enclosure in the state and is home to the Yucatán Symphony Orchestra.

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, MACAY (Contemporary Art Museum) – Located in a building from the 17th Century, the museum has more than 400 contemporary art pieces. Open Monday to Friday from 10:00 to 18:00 hrs. and Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 to 20:00 hrs.

Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán – Here it was founded the “Real y Pontificia Universidad de San Javier” in 1624. Today it houses the University's head offices, a library, an auditorium, dance and music rooms, and the gallery for the University Cultural Center.

Mercado de Artesanías, Bazar García Rejón (Craft Market) – Many interesting objects and crafts from the region are available in this picturesque market.

Museo Numismático (Numismatic Museum) – Displays more than 2 000 coins reflecting México's history. Open Saturday and Sundays 9:00 to 13:30 and from 16:30 to 20:30 hrs.

Museo de la Indumentaria Mexicana (Traditional Attire Museum) – An exhibition of beautifully crafted regional outfits and pre-Hispanic dresses. Furthermore, outfits can be sold or rented. Open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 to 19:00 hrs.

Museo Conmemorativo de la Inmigración Coreana a Yucatán (Korean Museum) – The museum displays the history of the first Koreans in Mexico, who labored in the henequen fields. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 to 20:00 hrs.

Felipe Carrillo Puerto Theater - The Art Deco-style building was constructed in 1958 with a capacity of 289 people. It is the forum for concerts, and many cultural events. There is a gallery space in the lobby.

Armando Manzanero Theater – It was formerly the Merida Cinema. Today it has three forums equipped with the latest technology: the Main Hall with a capacity for 1,450 spectators, the Cinematheque Manuel Ponce Barbachano for 227 people, and the Arts Cinema for 101 people.

Iglesia de las Monjas (Church of the Nuns) – This Gothic building was built in the 16th century. From the top of the convent you can enjoy a nice panoramic view of the city. The cloisters have been converted into a cultural center, the Casa de Cultura del Mayab, which houses the “Casa de las Artesanías” the state handicrafts store, where you can admire and purchase items made by artisans of the Yucatan and the rest of the country.



Museo de Arte Contemporáneo MACAY



What to see in Mérida ?

San Cristóbal Neighborhood

Museo de la Ciudad de Mérida (City Museum) – Located in the grand old post office building, displays an interesting exhibition about the historical development of the city of Mérida, from the pre-Hispanic times until our times. Open Tuesday to Friday from 10:00 to 14:00 and from 16:00 to 20:00 hrs.

Mercado Lucas de Gálvez – Visitors can buy all sorts of food, crafts, jewelry, and other picturesque objects.

San Benito Market – Since 1667 this plaza used to be the “Ciudadela de San Benito”. After the independence, it became part of a jail until 1895. Then in 2004, the space was transformed into a market, where you can pick up the freshest seasonal produce and some crafts from the region.

Mercado de Artesanías, Bazar García Rejón (Handcraft Market) – A visit to this market can become a fascinating tour. This is the ideal place to buy different items and crafts of the region, such as leather sandals, clothing, jewelry, hammocks, palm-fiber hats, and locally made liqueurs, among others.

Iglesia de San Cristóbal – A nice church constructed from 1756 to 1796. It was the last one built during the colonial era.

What to see in Mérida ?

Parque de las Américas y Centro Cultural La Ibérica (Las Americas Park and Cultural Center)

Parque de las Américas (Americas Park) - This beautiful park is divided into four sections. The first one is a playground, where you can rent rollerblades and bicycles to ride around the park. The second, there is a replica of a Mayan hut, housing the Library Jose Martí with some murals depicting important Latin American historic events made by the artist Bolaños Gallardo. The third section has an amphitheater, where you can watch the most varied shows and performances. The fourth has a monumental stone fountain representing the Mayan deities like Kukulcan and Chaak.

La Ibérica Cultural and Recreational Center – For many years this building was a hospital, until the early 60's. Today is a Cultural Center offering workshops for seniors and the degree in Music by the Escuela Superior de Artes de Yucatán (ESAY).



Parque Centenario



Santiago Neighborhood

Iglesia de Santiago - This church is located where the Spaniards found the first native settlement when they came to T'ho. They conquerors named it Santiago. This is the building where the first mass took place in the city.

Parque y Mercado de Santiago (Park and Market) - This neighborhood with a unique and special character make an atmosphere of special reminiscence. There are cinemas, a traditional market (Santos Degollado), and some nice shops. There is a cultural program called "Remembranzas Musicales" (Musical Memories), where every Tuesday locals and visitors alike share old.

Parque Zoológico del Centenario (Merida's Zoo) - The zoo has an aviary, a reptile house, a section for primates and one for mammals. There is also a playground and a gallery. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs. The playgrounds are open from 6:00 to 18:00 hrs.

Museo de Historia Natural (Natural History Museum) – It is located in an early-20th century mansion. The museum's exhibitions are related with the universe, the earth evolution, and the different stages in life. This museum has educational and recreational purposes.

Pinacoteca "Juan Gamboa Guzmán" (Picture Gallery) – Exhibits Painting from colonial times and Gottdiener bronze sculptures, which portray accurately the Yucatan rural of the 19th Century. Also houses occasional temporary exhibits. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 to 17:00 hrs. and Sunday from 10:00 to 17:00 hrs.

What to see in Mérida ?

Santa Ana and Santa Lucía Neighborhoods

Iglesia y Parque de Santa Lucía (Park and Church) – The construction started at the end of the 16th Century, and ended in 1620. The rectangular entrance is framed in quarry. The church features a nice stained-glass window and a belfry. Bordered by an arcade on the north and west sides, the park hosts popular entertainment several evenings a week, including a performance of Yucatecan songs by famous troubadours and the Yucalpeten Orchestra on Thursday nights (shows start at 9, but come early if you want to sit close to the performers). On Sunday, couples also come to dance to a live band.

Iglesia de Santa Ana - It was completed in 1733, and it was constructed-presumably over the foundation of a pre-Columbian Mayan edification.



San Sebastián Neighborhood

Iglesia y Parque de San Sebastián – The oldest section in the church was built in 1796, and since then it has been renovated several times. San Sebastián is one of the oldest and more traditional areas in Merida. Every August the San Sebastian Fair takes place in here.

La Ermita de Santa Isabel (Hermitage of St. Isabel or Good Travel) – It was built in the 17th Century. It was also a spot where tired travelers coming the other direction could find lodging and refreshment before entering Mérida. It has a botanical garden and an artificial waterfall. Open daily from 9:00. to 18:00 hrs.

Arco de San Juan



What to see in Mérida ?

San Juan Neighborhood

Iglesia y Parque de San Juan – The church was built between 1769 and 1770.

Inside the church there is a striking fountain called “La Negrita” which was brought from Paris at the beginning of the 20th century.

Arco de San Juan – The arches were built around 1690, like many other arches in Mérida, they were erected to establish the city limits. This is one of the largest one in the city.

La Mejorada Neighborhood

Iglesia de la Mejorada – Franciscan construction finished in 1610. Today the convent houses the State University's school of Architecture. Museo de Arte Popular (Popular Art Museum) - The museum displays more than 1,800 pieces of regional and national folk art. Open from Tuesday to Saturday 10:00 to 17.00 hrs. and Sunday from 10:00 to 15:00 hrs.

Museo de la Canción Yucateca (Museum of Yucatecan Song) – Trova music is considered part of the cultural heritage of the Yucatecan people. This museum exhibits oil paintings, sculptures, musical instruments, personal effects and documents that belonged to the most representative musicians. Open Tuesday to Friday from 9:00 to 17:00 hrs. Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 to 15:00 hrs.

Arco de Dragones (Arch) – The name is because it was located next to the old Dragons Quarter. On the top of the arch there is a niche with a nice sculpture of Saint Francis.

Arco de Puente (Arch) – It was named after the street where it was built.

Centro Cultural del Niño Yucateco - In 1821 the convent and hospital of La Mejorada became the "Headquarter of Dragoons." The property remained in the hands of the military until 1983. In 1989, the property was transformed into a Cultural Center, offering classes and workshops all year round for children.

Museo del Ferrocarril (Railway Museum) – Here the visitors can admire the history and evolution of the railroads in Yucatán. It exhibits more than 40 old railroad cars and lots of photos and documents from the past. Open Monday to Friday from 13:00 to 18:00 hrs.



Centro Cultural del Niño Yucateco

What to see in Mérida ?

Izamá Neighborhood

Iglesia de Itzimná – A small chapel built in 1572 and renovated in 1710. It is located in one of the most beautiful and traditional corners in Merida. This is one of the most beautiful and traditional places of the city of Mérida.



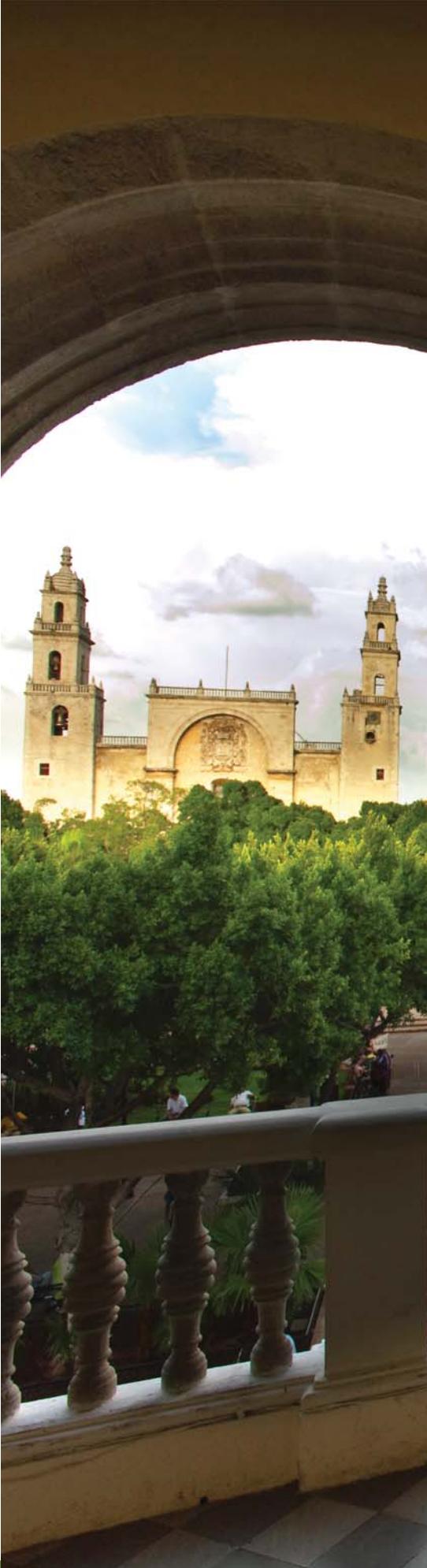
Other Sightseeing

Gran Museo del Mundo Maya (Great Museum of the Maya) - Modern cultural space considered one of the most important in Latin America. The museum features four permanent galleries that exhibit more than 500 important artifacts from the Mayan culture that captivates the attention of the visitor. It also offers a media room for the presentation of documentaries, a restaurant, a shop and a parking lot. The museum has a magnificent and original light and sound show created and designed specifically for its unique architecture. The show is a pictorial work divided in different stories: The Creation of the World, The Appearance of the Land and the Sea, Men and Gods, The Ancient Mayas, and The Conquest and Memory of the Mayan World. The show takes place every night at 21:30, and 22:30 hrs. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Map of Mérida and Surroundings



Mérida Downtown Map



Symbols

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Airport | Tourist Attraction |
| Colonial Architecture | Medical Service |
| Handcrafts | Theater |
| Historic House | Bus Station |
| Market | Grocery Store |
| Museum | Tourist Information |



VALLADOLID PUEBLO MÁGICO

It is a beautiful colonial city, located strategically between the city of Merida (two hours) and the city of Cancún, 40 km away of the majestic Chichén Itzá. Today it is now known as "The Eastern Capital of the Maya". An elegant colonial town distinguished by the hospitality of the people. The main attractions are: Convent of San Bernardino, a building of majestic dimensions and superb Franciscan style and the Church of San Gervasio. Valladolid offers good hotels and restaurants.

Convento de San Bernardino de Sierra

What to see in Valladolid ?

Palacio Municipal (City Hall) – Built in the 16th Century, it was reformed in the 19th Century. There are nice murals in the second floor depicting the history of the city.

Catedral de San Gervasio (Cathedral of San Gervasio) – The cathedral was completed in 1545 then destroyed and rebuilt in 1702. It has a beautiful facade with detailed stonework.

Museo de San Roque – It was the first hospital in the village, and work this way during the 16th to 18th Century. Today is a museum with an interesting exhibit of archaeological pieces, traditional Mayan medicine and handcrafts of the region.

Iglesia de la Candelaria – The Candelaria Virgin is the Town's Saint and each February 2nd there is a big celebration with cultural, gastronomic, livestock and artistic activities. The complex has a beautiful entrance supported by arches.

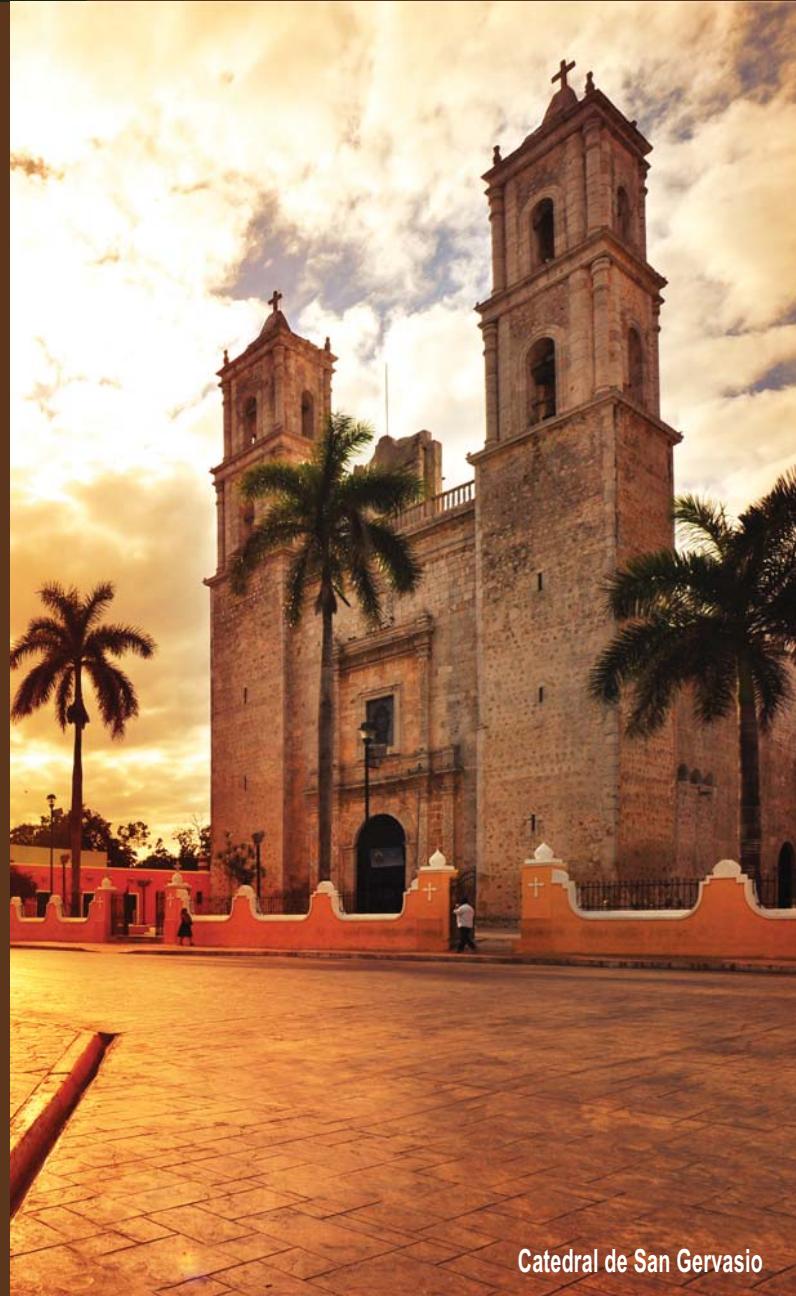
Iglesia de Santa Ana – It was built in the 16th Century, and has a nice stained glass in the facade.

Cenote Zaci – It is located in the middle of the town, near the main plaza. Today is a park, and steps lead down into the cavern mouth of this huge dramatic sinkhole with fascinating patterns of light. This cenote is about 260 ft deep and it has a diameter of 150 feet.

Iglesia de Santa Lucía – Built at the beginning of the 17th Century, the church has a facade based by a simple reed-mace with three bell columns, and the frame doors are shaped on stoned with vegetal figures.

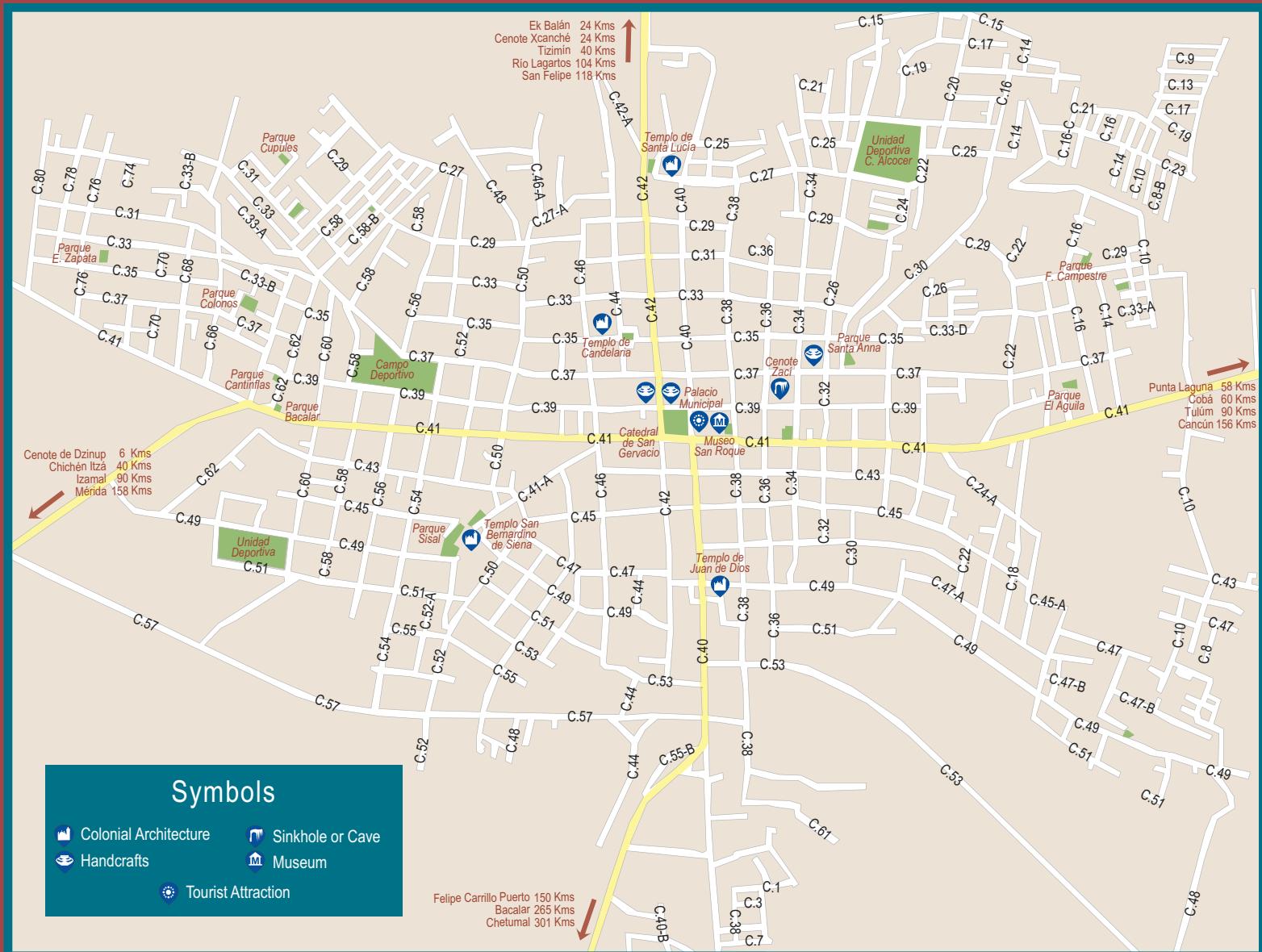
Convento de San Bernardino de Siena - Construction was started in the year 1552 by the Franciscans, is one of the most beautiful buildings of the colonial era. The highlight is the church's giant altarpiece in polychrome wood. On the left-hand side a door leads to a two-story cloister of massive stone colonnades, housing. The convent also has a sinkhole named Sis-Há.

Casa de los Venados (House of the Deer) – It is an 18,000 sq. ft. private home/museum of Mexican folk and contemporary art with over 3000 pieces of art. The house is owned by John and Dorianne Venator and displays one of the largest collections of folk art in private hands. Tours (in English and Spanish) are given most days at 10:00 hrs, but advance reservations are advised.



Catedral de San Gervasio

Map of Valladolid





Convento de San Antonio de Padua



IZAMAL PUEBLO MÁGICO

It is located right in the center of the peninsula, 72 km to the east of Merida. Located right in the center of the peninsula, 72 km to the east of Merida. It is probably one of the eldest cities in Yucatán. Actually known, as the "City of the Hills" because of the archaeological remains located in the town center. This gorgeous colonial city has buildings and beautiful old houses painted in white and ochre.

The Franciscan Monastery is famous for its majestic porticos cloister, the largest in America. Beside the Convent is The Community Museum

Izamal offers restaurants, nice hotels and handcrafts stores. First Magical Town of Mexico, its history, from its foundation to the present, is bonded to a strong religious tradition; this is because this site was once an enormous Mayan ceremonial center.

What to see in Izamal ?

Centro Cultural y Artesanal Izamal – The museum exhibits magnificent handcrafts. It is located in the Central Plaza.

Kinich Kakmó Pyramid - The base measures 200 meters, and rises 34 meters. With a volume of 700,000 cubic meters, this is the largest structure on the Yucatan Peninsula.

Rides in horse-drawn carriages - The visitors can take a charming ride down neat cobblestone streets, around the parks, squares and historical suburbs. They are located in the main plaza every day from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

San Antonio de Padua Monastery - Completed in 1561, the atrium of the Monastery was second in size only to that at the Vatican. It is a jewel of a colonial era. The Museum of the Community is located under the convent. Enjoy the magnificent spectacle of the light and sound show every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, starting at 20:30 hrs.



Recorridos en Calesa

Progreso

Located only 36 km north from Mérida. It is the most important commercial port of the entire southeastern region of Mexico, and it is also the arrival point of many cruises from around the world.

Progreso has wonderful beaches of gentle waves, so it is the perfect place to practice aquatic sports like windsurf, kitesurf, sailing or jetskiing.

Its main attraction is the old building occupied by the maritime customs built in the 19th Century. Some other places to visit are: the City Hall, the Lighthouse built in 1891 with a height of 40 meters, the chapel of San Antonio Yaxactún, and the six kilometer pier, the longest in the world, due to the shallow water on the Yucatan coast. At the end of the pier there is a nice area for fishing.

In Progreso you can take a stroll along the seafront and enjoy the breeze and savor the delicious regional and fresh seafood served in many restaurants lined in front of the port.



Playa de Progreso



Celestún

Celestun is in Yucatan, Mexico. It is a fishing village considered an ecotourism paradise, famous for its ria, beautiful flamingo colonies, freshwater springs and beaches. The reserve is a wintering zone for migratory birds, more than 400 species have been identified here, and is the main feeding area for flamingos, which nests along the north coast of the Peninsula. The best time to visit is in the winter when migrants abound and the number of flamingos is at its peak.

Celestún has fresh-water lagoons, "ojos de agua", hidden among the natural tunnels of the estuary, where the visitors can swim. It is important to visit the "Tampetén" or petrified forest, a unique landscape. In the heart of the town there is a beautiful beach with a series of informal restaurants with an exquisite variety of fresh fish and shellfish.



Tourist Routes

Emeral Coast

Progreso, with a wide coast ideal for water sports; the seafront feature many restaurants.

Uaymitún, a nice place to enjoy watersports and relax. There is a three-level viewpoint to admire the beautiful flamingos and local wildlife, including a wide variety of birds that inhabit the estuary.

Dzilam de Bravo, this coastal town offers long stretches of clean, sandy beaches perfect for water sports. You can only visit the church of San Antonio de Padua (16th century), "Inmaculada Concepción y San Pedro" Church (17th century), and the Municipal Palace (19th century).

Telchac Puerto, a laid back place ideal for swimming. The little town has a lovely plaza with a lighthouse. Nearby is the Rosada Lagoon the habitat for migratory birds.

El Cuyo, located in a protected area with fascinating flora and fauna, a gem for nature and peace lovers. Here you can enjoy boat and motorcycle rides. There are restaurants and cabins.

Sisal, this town was one of the most important ports during the colonial era. It was the port from which all the henequen fiber, known as Sisal, was exported to the rest of the world during the 19th century. This fishing village has an isolated and calm beach with coastal dunes, bushes and palm trees. You can visit the Santiago Fortress, the lighthouse, and the Customs Building. The promenade is the perfect place to enjoy a beautiful sunset.

Tourist Routes

Flamingos Route

Celestún, the Celestun Biosphere's main attraction is the colony of flamingos, a unique natural spectacle along the mangrove vegetation. It has a beach of incomparable beauty and an exquisite variety of seafood.

El Palmar, one of the most important natural reserves, home of migratory birds, ideal for eco-tourist, nature-lovers and adventure. It has lodging, huts, restaurants, and semi-virgin beaches.



Celestún



Magic Waters, Cenotes

Cuzamá, this area is very well known for the large number of cenotes found here. The tour through the cenotes is done in trucks, small cars pulled by horses, along seven kilometers of vegetation. The main cenotes are Chelentún, with concrete stars has incredibly blue and clear water, ideal for swimming; Chacsinic-che, has also crystal clear waters; and Bolonchojol, one of the most beautiful cenotes in Yucatan, it is accessed by a wooden ladder that disappears dramatically into a round hole cut into the rock, swimming here is an unforgettable experience.

Sotuta de Peón, one of the few henequen haciendas in full production, the tour will show you a Mayan house, and the amazing Dzul-há cenote, where you can swim; schedule: Monday to Saturday 9:00 to 16:00 hrs.

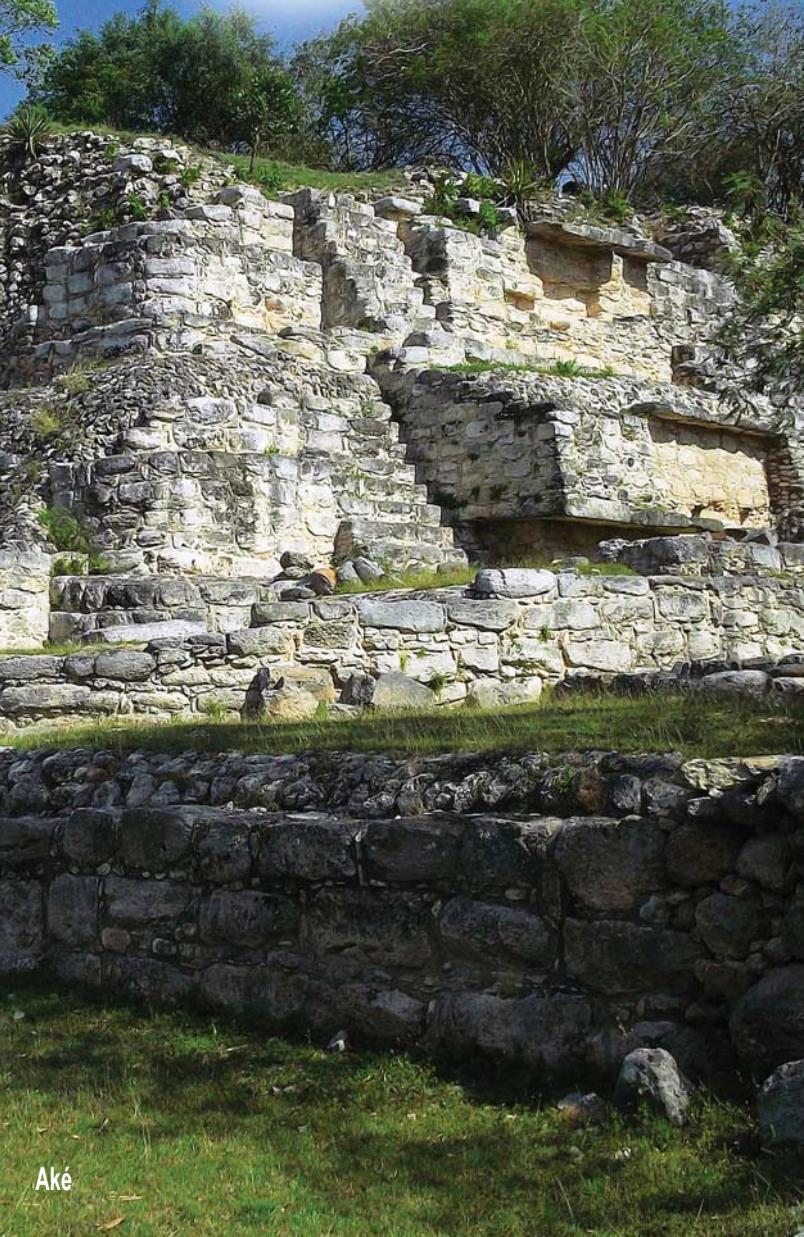
Tekit, offers a deep cave-cenote, archaeological ruins known as Chumul, the Ex-convent of San Antonio de Padua, and the Chapel of San Cristóbal.

Tourist Routes

Central Route

Aké, in its central part there is a terrace known as the Gran Plaza, surrounded by buildings used by the governing class; it also has a 32 kilometers long pedestrian causeway, or "sacbe", it runs from Ake to Izamal, and a wall surrounding the city; schedule: Tuesday to Sunday 9:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Izamal: Mexico's Magic Town, visit the San Antonio de Padua Convent, a colonial masterpiece with the greatest atrium in the world, which has a museum and an altar; there is also the great light and sound show every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 20:30 hrs; the city also features important pre-Hispanic monuments like Kinich Kakmó, the largest pyramid in Yucatán and the third largest in Mexico; enjoy the city with a ride in a horse-drawn carriage.



Aké

Tunkas, offers the Tunkas Temple, several archaeological zones, and four Cenotes (X'tekdzonot, Mumundzonot, Lukun Chan y Chan X'azul) where visitors can enjoy a relaxing bath or practice cave diving. This is a good place to buy "huipile", the traditional blouses Mayan women have used for centuries, as well as hemp hammocks, and pottery. Try the exquisite Mayan traditional dishes, accompanied by optional fresh Habanero pepper.

Tekal de Venegas, you can visit two interesting colonial temples, San Roman and San Pedro. And very near from the town is Oxwatz an eco-archaeological trail. The tour takes about 6 to 8 hours, so you have to be an athletic person, but you will enjoy lakes, ponds, birds, wild fauna, as well as haciendas from the 18th century, the archeological site Xbaatun, sacbes (old Mayan roads) and you can have a refreshing swim in the cool waters of the cenotes in middle of the jungle.



Izamal

Tourist Routes

Convents Route

Acanceh, there are nine sinkholes and two caves in the municipality. The main plaza combines two pre-Hispanic constructions, the Pyramid and the Palace of Stucco, both recently restored, and colonial buildings. The temple dedicated to Nuestra Señora de la Natividad (Our Lady of Nativity) stands out, as well as the chapel of the Virgin of Guadalupe built in the 16th century.

Tecoh, visit a church and a convent dedicated to the Virgin of the Asunción, built over the base of a very large Mayan pyramid. The carved stones and altar are impressive with Mayan inscriptions.

Mayapán, the last great Mayan capital with over four thousand archaeological structures.

Tekit, this town was of great importance in the colonial era and exhibits two important religious buildings: the ex-convent of San Antonio de Padua and the Chapel of San Cristóbal. In an area known as Chumul, there is a deep sinkhole-cave and archaeological remains.

Mama, the temple and former Franciscan monastery has a beautiful bell tower in front, as well as a closed atrium, which is one of the most famous in the region. Nearby is a typical henequen hacienda named Tepich.

Teabo, this little town is known for the beautiful parish and convent of San Pedro and San Pablo, built during the 17th century. Inside is the Chapel of the Indians from 1617.

Chumayel, this town is famous because here was founded a copy of the Books of Chilam Balam, the sacred books of the Maya. Stands the Templo de la Purísima Concepción (Temple of the Purest Conception), a nice 16th century church.

Maní, this is the town where the most famous event of Diego de Landa's career happened on 1561, when he ordered a pyre to be prepared on the main square to burn several thousand objects worshiped by the Maya, including codices, precious folding books where the Maya recorded their history, beliefs, and astronomy. This is a place full of history where you can visit Plaza de la Independencia (Independence Square), Plaza de la Ceibas, La Candelaria Chapel, the Convent and Church of St. Michael the Archangel (16th century), the San Juan Chapel (17th century) the Santa Lucia Chapel (18th century) and the Santiago Chapel (18th century).

Oxutzcab, is known as the "Orchard of the State of Yucatan," for its production of citrus and other fruits; you can visit the local market and taste some of this juicy seasonal fresh fruits. Here you can visit the Temple of San Francisco de Asís (18th century), the Ermita de la Virgen del Pilar (17th century), and the San Esteban Chapel (19th century).

Ticul, The city is nicknamed La Perla del Sur ("The Pearl of the South"), as it is in the southern part of Yucatán state. It is known for the manufacture of women's dress shoes and it is also the center for large-scale pottery production, in fact the potters welcome visitors to purchase finished pieces. Here you will find a mixture of culture, a big colonial buildings and thatched roof Mayan homes. Some of the important colonial buildings are: colonial Convent and Parish of San Antonio de Padua and the chapels of Santiago, Mejorada, Our Lady of Guadalupe, San Román and San Ramón. In Votholin, you can visit the Temple of San Buena Ventura (18th century) and in Postinuch the Temple and Convent Asunción (18th century) and the Church of the Immaculate Conception. You can also visit the main house of the Ex Hacienda Tabi.

Muna, you can visit the Temple and Ex-Convent of the Assumption built in the 17th century, and the San José Tibceh Hacienda. In this market town you can find excellent reproductions of Maya ceramics in the main square.

Umán, features the magnificent Parish of San Francisco part of a 16th century convent. This building of colossal proportions has an unfinished facade made of quarry stone with three arches and columns.

Dzibilchaltún, the most famous structure is "La Casa de las Siete Muñecas" (house of the seven dolls). On the vernal equinox, the sun rises so that it shines directly through one window of the temple and out the other; this is another example of the mathematical precision of the Maya. It also has the museum of Mayan People, and a cenote where you can swim.

Xcambó, it is still considered as a place of pilgrimage and worship the Virgin of X'Cambó. It offers an archaeological zone and peaceful beaches.

San Crisanto, with mangrove vegetation and a beautiful beach it is a place for nature lovers.



Tecoh



Muna



Maní



Tourist Routes

Itzaes Route

Chichén itzá, is one of the new seven wonders of the world. Among its most outstanding buildings are: the Castle of Chichén Itzá, the Templo de los Guerreros (Temple of Warriors), the group of the Thousand Columns, the Platform of Venus, the Tzompantli, the Ball Game, the Caracol (Snail) or Observatory, and the Church; schedule: Daily 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Balankanché Caves, a cavern with a light and sound show that was once used as a ceremonial center by the Mayas. At its entrance, there is an altar, the "Balam Throne", where the Mayas celebrated their ceremonies. There is also a semi-dry lake where Mayan offerings, such as shells and pieces of Jade, were found. Schedule: Daily 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Ek Balam, it has 45 structures and is surrounded by two concentric stonewalls; there is a ball game court and a beautiful arch.

San Felipe, this is a fishermen's town with colorful rustic wood houses and a beautiful inlet.

Río Lagartos, El Cuyo and Las Coloradas with protected natural reserves, a delight for bird watchers, and ideal for Eco tourism.

Valladolid, also known as the "Pearl of the East", features the Convent of San Bernardino and the cathedral of San Gervacio. Close by is the Zací cenote, now set up as a restaurant and natural pool.



Uxmal

Tourist Routes

Puuc Route

Maxcanú, it is known as the Gate of the Puuc Route. You can visit the central church and observe its stone-carved walls and the temple dedicated to Our Lady of Carmen, built in the 17th century.

Oxkintok, features an structure known as El Laberinto (the labyrinth), believed to represent a trip to the underworld.

Kabah, the second greatest religious center of the Puuc style, stands: El Arco (the Arch), main door to the city and the Palacio de los Mascarones with an impressive facade composed of 250 large masks of the God Chaac.

Sayil, is distributed in three zones, the most remarkable construction is "The Palace".

Xlapak, features one of greatest jewels of the Puuc architectonic style, El Palacio (The Palace), has a magnificent facade with geometric elements and large masks of Chaac.

Labná, is made of a set of dispersed buildings, famous for the beautiful Mayan construction carved in stone: El Arco (the Arch) and other buildings, like El Palacio and El Mirador.

Tekax, this place offer caves, colonial buildings and Mayan vestiges. It has a nice main square and you can visit the Ex-Convent and Parish of San Juan Baptist (17th century), the Hermitage of San Diego (17th century), this is a great place to get a good panoramic view of the town, the Chapel of San Francisco, the Chapel of the Eternal Father, and "La Casa de los Tres Pisos" (Three-story House), a unique construction in the area. You can also visit the nearby cenotes (Sabac-Ha, Los Chocantes, Oxpel-Hal and Actun-Hom), however it is always advisable to make the visit with a guide.

Chacmultún, this old city is integrated by four monumental architectonic groups: Chacmultún, Cabalpak, Xethpol and Central together, they cover approximately one square kilometer.

Loltún, this caves will amaze every visitor. At the entrance, is the famous bas-relief carving known as "The Loltún Warrior". In the diverse halls, galleries and chambers – almost 196 feet deep and extending for almost 2,300 feet- diverse archeological pieces have been found. The two-hour tour will take you for more than 3,000 feet though lighting paths. A special feature is the columns that sound like bells when you struck them with the flat side of the fist. There are also cave paintings. Schedule: Open daily from: 9:00 to 14:00 hrs.

Uxmal, famed for its beautifully decorated constructions bring into life through the light and sound show performed every night; the most notorious buildings are: Pyramid of the Magician, an elliptical pyramid, the Nunnery Quadrangle, the Palace of the Governor, the most famous of Uxmal's treasures, the House of the Turtles and the House of the Doves.

Mayan Archeological Sites in Yucatán

Chichén Itzá - The most famous Mayan ruins. One of the most impressive structures, The Castle, is a 98-foot pyramid crowned by a temple dedicated to Kukulkán. This building is famous for a remarkable phenomenon, which creates a sunlit serpent on the steps in the northwest side of the pyramid during the spring and fall equinoxes. Other notorious buildings are: the Temple of the Jaguars; the Temple of the Warriors; the Tzompantli; the Ball Court, the largest in Mexico; the Snail or Caracol, an astronomical observatory and possibly the sole round building ever built by the Maya; the Nunnery or Casa de las Monjas; and the Temple of the Eagles. The Sacred Well, a cenote or sinkhole that sits half a mile north of The Castle, was used for human sacrifices. Open daily from 08:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Every night there is a beautiful light and sound show at 20:00 hrs. in summer and at 19:00 hrs in winter, with simultaneous translation available.

Balankanche, is located only six kilometers from Chichen Itza, the cave should be visited for the beauty of its natural stone formations and for its archaeological importance as a ceremonial site for the Maya. There is a light and sound show inside the cave.

Acanceh – In the main plaza there are two buildings that have been restored: the Pyramid and the "Palace of the Stuccos". Both are part of the Early Classic period between 500 and 600 AD. There are nine sinkholes and two caves. Eastern part of the Main Square is a nice 16th century colonial church dedicated to Virgin Guadalupe. Open daily from 08:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Aké – Some of the most striking elements of this pre-Hispanic cities the complex known as "El palacio" (The palace) and a series of sacbeob (causeways) connected the city with other nearby centers. Aké reached its maximum development in the Classic period. The site also includes two cenotes and the Hacienda of San Lorenzo Ake, a henequen plantation that has continued to flourish thanks to the care of the owners. Open daily from 08:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Dzibilchaltún – The site and the surroundings have more than 8,000 structures, but the most outstanding is The Temple of the Seven Dolls, an imposing looking building on a pyramidal base with a short tower atop its roof. The doorways of the temple were built in exact solar alignment with the rising sun, such that the early rays pass through them on the spring and fall equinoxes. There is also the Xlacah Cenote, a beautiful freshwater pool just off the side of the main plaza, and the museum full of interesting artifacts of Spanish and Maya origin. Open daily from 08:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Ek Balám - It has a majestic architecture. The main buildings are divided in two squares. The Acropolis is one of the most voluminous structures in Meso-America. It has 45 structures and two concentric walls, which served as defense against attack, surround the layout of the site. There were many smaller walls that snaked through the city as well. Open daily from 08:00 to 17:00 hrs.

The X-Canche Cenote (sinkhole) is located 1.5 km from the archaeological site, with rappelling and zip-line services, bicycle and kayak rental, cabins, dining and sitting areas. To get here there are mountain bikes for rent next to the entrance to the archaeological site. Open Monday to Sunday from 9:00 to 16:30 hrs.



Dzibilchaltún



Ek Balam

Mayan Archeological Sites in Yucatán

Mayapán - This walled city has 4,000 mounds and several sinkholes. It was the most important center of the Mayan civilization during the 13th Century. It's the same size than Chichen-Itza and you will find the buildings are replicas of the ones in Chichen, but in smaller size. Some outstanding buildings are: El Caracol and El Castillo, where during the days of the solstice (June 21 and December 21) a light and shadow phenomena can be seen, similar to the descent of the serpent in Chichén Itzá. Open daily from 8:00 to 15:00 hrs.

Uxmal - A majestic archaeological site, considered as the most splendid archaeological site from the Pre Hispanic era on the American Continent, declared World Heritage by the UNESCO. The main attractions in the site are: The Nun's Quadrangle, The Ballgame Court, The Temple of the Monuments, The House of the Turtles, The Governor's Palace, and The Magician's Pyramid, a colossal construction 35 meters height. There is excellent site museum with a nice exhibition of carved sculpted pieces and ceramic. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Everyday a light and sound show takes place, telling the legends and history of the site. The show takes place at 20:00 hrs. during the summer and at 19:00 hrs. during winter. There is simultaneous translation available in seven languages.

Yaxunah – The architectonic structures connect this city with the sites of the Puuc style. Besides having archaeological remains and the longest *sacbé* of the Mayan area, villagers of Yaxunah successfully manage their eco-tourism complex, with few simple cabins with showers, hammocks and beds.

One of Yaxunah's cenotes is an enormous, sapphire-colored pool framed by exotic vines called Lol Ha with stone steps. Open Monday to Friday.

X'cambó - This is one of most widely spread areas in the peninsular coastline and its great size buildings are settled on the humid forest by the moor, which is just two kilometers from the coastline. Xcambo counts with 10 natural springs. The nearness to the ocean permitted the Mayans to convert this pre-Hispanic city into a very important center of salt production. The most outstanding structures are: the Temple of Sacrifices, and the Temple of the Cross, the tallest temple in

the site. In the summit on a clear day, you can see the coast, about a mile away. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Oxkintok – It is characterized for the existence of a labyrinth-like construction named Satunsat, considered to represent a journey to the underworld and it is unique in the entire State of Yucatán. The hieroglyphic inscriptions found contain dates, some of which are the oldest known in Yucatán. It consists of four architectural sets called Ah-Canul, May, Tzat Tun Tzat and Dzib. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Kabáh – It is a monumental example of the Puuc style architecture. The archaeological site has two groups of buildings, the Codz Pop, which facade is ornamented with 250 masks of the rain god Chaac; the Palace, characterized for its extraordinary constructions; and the slender stone Arch, which is thought to be the center of the city and the entrance to the "sac-be" to Uxmal. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Sayil - Experts believe that Sayil, or "place of the red ants," flourished between AD 600 and 900. Among the most important buildings are: The Palace, The Ball Game, The South Palace and the Observatory Complex. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Xlapak - There are three pyramids in restoration process. The most important is one named The Palace, which consists of nine rooms and a beautiful façade, which is richly ornamented with frets and geometrical figures. The architecture is an example of the ostentatious style of the Classic or Florescent Puuc. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Labná – It is outstanding because of an elegant arch shaped construction, a good example of the Puuc architecture. Some other interesting constructions are El Mirador and the Palace, decorated with figures honoring the Chaac God and its 70 "cheltunes" (water cisterns). Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Chacmultún - The buildings are of outstanding beauty, which are really worthwhile taking the time to visit the site. There are four architectonic groups: Central Group, with the highest and most beautiful constructions; the Chacmultun Group; the Kabalpak Group, with three small constructions; and the Xethpool Group. The chambers on some of the buildings display several Mayan murals incredibly well preserved. Open daily from 8:00 to 17:00 hrs.



Mayapán

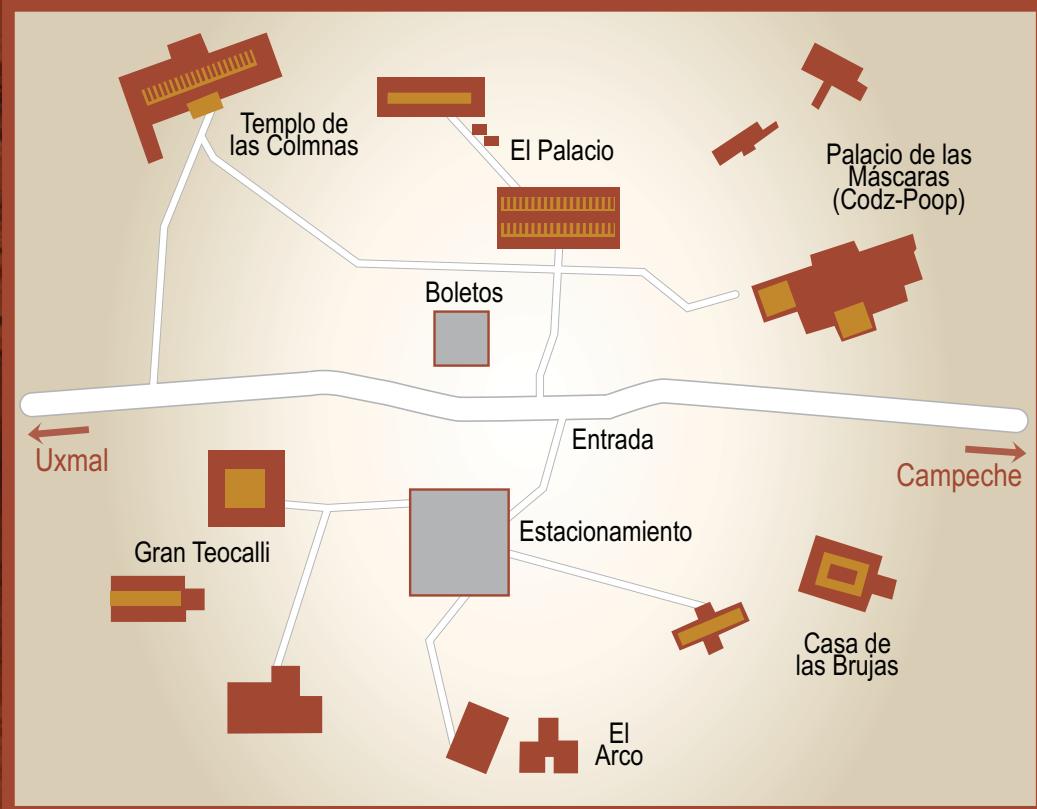
Map of Chichén Itzá



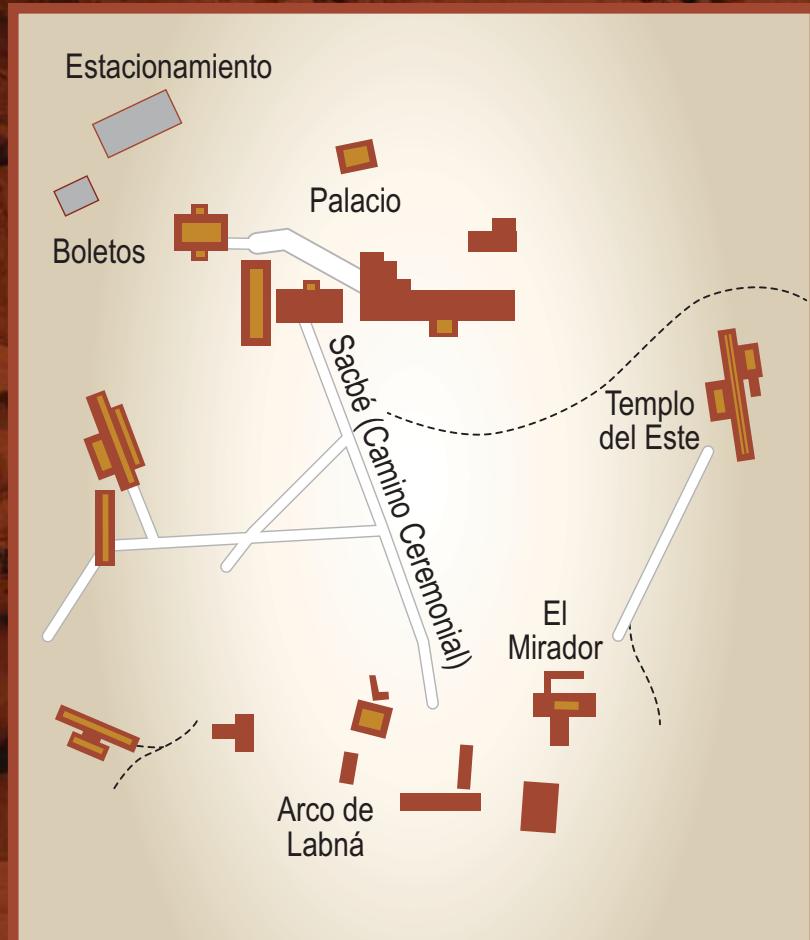
Map of Uxmal



Map of Kabah



Map of Labná



Nature and Adventure in Yucatán

As a result of a meteorite impact 65 million years ago, a vast network of underwater caves, known as cenotes, were formed. This cenotes or sinkholes are natural places of great beauty, and perfect for an exciting adventure. Yucatan also offers parks and Natural Protected Areas recognized for their biodiversity, such as Celestun and Ria Lagartos, with lush vegetation, mangrove tunnels and home to thousands of pink flamingos.

Yucatan offers a broad, varied range of recreational activities for adventurous nature-lovers like: trekking, zip lining, cave diving and horseback riding, among many others.

Exploring grottoes, caves and cenotes

There are various caves, grottoes and sinkholes, ideal to explore, swim or dive. One of the wonders found in Yucatan are the cenotes, it is estimated that there are over 3,000 with only 1400 actually studied and registered. The Maya considered the Cenotes as the entrance to their "Underworld", called U'kux Xibalba.

Cenotes in Cuzamá, a tour along the different cenotes is made in a "truck" pulled by horses throughout 7 Km of trails enriched by nature. Cenote Zací, Semi-opened well; swimming its allowed in its refreshing turquoise waters where you will see rare species of eyeless black fish known as "lub". Cenote Xlacah, open sinkhole that goes down to this depth at a sharp angle. It is located in the archaeological zone of Dzibilchaltún. Veleta fish lives here. Cenote Sambulá, it is characterized by its warm and clear waters and it is located inside a grotto. Cenote Dzinup ó X'keken, this is an underground cenote with a hole in the ceiling. It is probably one of the most beautiful cenotes of Yucatan, famous for its deep, refreshing and crystal clear waters ideal for swimming. Grutas de Balankanche, you should visit this place for the beauty of its natural stone formations and for its archaeological importance as a ceremonial site for the Maya. Grutas de Loltún, one of the biggest known from the huge cave system that covers a great territory in southern Yucatan. They have been arranged for a safe tour, approximately 1000 meters of illuminated paths.



Ik Kil

Bird watching.

One of the premier birding destinations in North America is the Yucatan Peninsula. In the State of Yucatan there is 443 species of birds, almost half of Mexico's 1,050. The birding is easy in terms of climate and terrain. The major birding areas are safely accessible by car on well-maintained roads, and excellent guides are available. Cenotes and Petenes, as well as the Mayan archaeological sites with easy paths, are always productive places.

The best time for bird watchers is during winter. You can watch: ocellated turkey, the great curassow, the Yucatecan quail, black-headed gull, and the Yucatán poorwill, among others.

The Rio Lagartos Reserve is considered an especially important reserve for aquatic birds, with 395 species, the most of any of the reserves. From late winter into spring, thousands of bright pink flamingos crowd the estuaries of this beautiful natural destination, 90% of the entire flamingo population of the western hemisphere come to Ría Lagartos to nest.

Celestun Biosphere Reserve, is considered a pink flamingo sanctuary, and is also home of over 300 birds' species among residents, migratory and endemics. Here you will find great combination of different habitats like Tropical Forest, Mangrove Forest and Sand Dune vegetation where you will be able to see tropical birds, water birds and shorebirds. The "Laguna Rosada", near Telchac Puerto, home to migratory birds, and a large flamingo colony.

The Yucatan Bird Festival takes place from March to November. The activities include field trips, conferences, workshops, photography and drawing contest, activities in the Merida Zoo, and a "bird-a-thon", among others.



Río Lagartos



Aquatic Sports.

Two hundred and seventeen miles of coastline white, sandy beaches, exotic vegetation and picturesque coastal communities and their hospitality are the characteristics of the Yucatan coast. There are also rivers with tranquil waters, and lush mangrove coastline with 12 miles of channels, all of them ideal for kayaking. Puerto Progreso y Telchac Puerto, with tranquil waters and a 40 knots breeze, are perfect for windsurfing, kitesurfing and sailboard.

El Cuyo and Río Lagartos, are natural paradises, the habitat for jaguars, turtles, flamingos, motmots and cranes.

Fishing. Some of the best places are: the Special Biosphere Reserve of Ría Celestún, or the Port of Progreso, where you can catch: dogfish, gropers, croakers, flatfish, snapper and barracuda.

Progreso





Golf

Golf

Yucatan is currently considered one of the main tourist destinations worldwide. Mérida counts with first level golf courses with the most comfortable and luxurious facilities. The Yucatan Country Club is a 27-hole course, designed by the renowned Jack Nicklaus, and the project plans the construction of a whole complex with hotel, spa, restaurants and a clubhouse. La Ceiba Golf Course is an 18-hole course with beautifully manicured greens surrounded by homes.

Enjoying the natural environment

Chuburná Carbonera, discover the Bocana Carbonera and enjoy the boat riding and the tours of the region, or you can try fishing and camping on the beach.

Ria Progreso, the Cooperative offers day and night tours in the mangrove ecosystem.

San Crisanto, 1,472 hectares of mangrove vegetation and 3,500 meters of beach with Mayan huts.

Sayachuleb, you can enjoy tours within the Dzilam Bravo Natural Reserve.

Oxwatz, an eco-park dedicated to the conservation of nature, offers lagoons, the majestic "Cenote Azul" and the archaeological site of XBAATUN .

U-najilekbalam (the house of the jaguar), features cabins located in Ek Balam, where the traditions and customs of the ancient Mayas have been preserved, you can also visit the Cenote Xcanché.

Punta Nichilí, discover the biodiversity of their trails, enjoy a boat ride watching the beautiful scenery, the crocodiles and the different species of birds; visit an archaeological island, and practice Catch-and-release angling.

Sihunché Park, an eco-archaeological park specializing in bird watching, the park offers 4 km of nice trails.



Aventura

Culture and Traditions in Yucatán

The people from Yucatan integrate their beliefs, celebrations and ancient customs into their daily lives, and create a very special kind of magical syncretism.

Archeology. Yucatan is the cradle of the Mayan culture and its historical legacy is unique in the world.

Historic Architecture. The "White City" and its surroundings display ancient buildings and haciendas from the 16th to the 20th Century.

Handcrafts. Yucatán is famous for the hammocks, "guayaberas", the "panama" hat, the filigree jewelry in gold and silver and the Huipil with beautiful cross-stitch embroidery of flowers, all of them available in the Lucas Galvez Market and the surroundings of the main plaza in Merida.

Festivals & Traditions. The Hanal Pixán in the Mayan language means "food of souls." As the sun rises every 31st of October so does the beginning of the celebration of this festivity and lasts until the 2nd of November of every year.

Tradition says the souls of the loved ones are still present, and the deceased faithfully arrive each year to visit and be honored by their family and friends. The celebration includes an altar with food, flowers wooden cross, among other things.

Gastronomy. The rich, distinct, and varied cuisine of Yucatan is one of the many reasons to visit this destination. The cooking delights of the traditional Yucatan cuisine are a mixture of ingredients used by ancient Mayas, and flavors brought from Spain, Caribbean and Middle East. Among the most popular dishes are: cochinita pibil, pork marinated in orange juice and served with beans and red onion; salbutes, made from corn dough and stuffed with turkey, onion and avocado; panuchos, corn dough stuffed with beans; and papadzules, corn dough soaked in a green pumpkin seed sauce called kol and stuffed with hard-boiled eggs and later bathed in a tomato, onion and garlic sauce.

Music. Any plaza or garden is a good place to listen modern day troubadours, or the rhythmic sound of jarana. Yucatan is famous for the music they play, called the trova. The trova is played by troubadours, and has brought worldwide attention because of the music. You can enjoy this music and the traditional Jarana dancers in any small plaza or in a beautiful park.

The Yucatan Trova is considered a national treasure, combines lyrical poetry with Cuban rhythms, bolero and Colombian bambuco.

Merida offers musical performances almost every day:

On Monday evenings at 21:00 hrs, the Vaquería takes over the street in front of the Palacio Municipal. This colorful dance has its origins in the Yucatán's colonial days. In their most beautiful white dresses, embroidered with flowers, the wives of the local cowboys (or vaqueros) were in charge of the festivities and led the dance.

On Tuesday, head to the Plaza de Santiago for the "Remembranzas Musicales" at 20:30 hrs. In one of Mérida's most beautiful plazas, bands play the greatest hits of the Big Bands, and hundreds of locals dance the night away.

On Thursday, head over to the Plaza de Santa Lucia for the weekly traditional "Serenata Yucateca" at 21:00 hrs. This is the best known of Mérida's free concerts, and for over forty years, has invited some of the peninsula's most famous composers and musicians to the stage.

On Friday, "Mérida Cultural cerca de ti" (Cultural Merida close to you), in many parks of the city at 21:00 hrs various musical shows are presented.

On Saturday, from 21:00 to 02:00 at the foot of Paseo Montejo, near the Plaza of Santa Ana, a stage is erected for the "Noche Mexicana". You can enjoy a musical tribute to the sounds, styles and dances of Mexico.

There's a constantly changing line-up, as singers, bands and dance Troupes from across the country are invited to participate.

On Sunday, "Merida en Domingo", in the Plaza Grande and 60th Street to the Santa Lucia Park from 9:00 to 21:00 hrs, you can enjoy the Yucatecan cuisine, crafts, folklore, traditional and contemporary musical performances and dances. Beside you can enjoy the Sunday Bicycle Route from 8:00 to 12:30 hrs. The route runs from La Ermita de Santa Isabel to the Main Plaza, then north along Paseo de Montejo, this is a nice way to wonder around this city.

Additionally, the Yucatan Symphony Orchestra plays two regular seasons at the Jose Peon Contreras Theater, and features classical music, jazz and opera every Friday at 21:00 and Sundays at 12:00.

The handcrafts, the cuisine, the music, the folklore, and the traditions are irrefutable proof that Yucatan is a magic land with open, warm atmosphere, where visitors always feel welcome.





Haciendas

Since the 16th century, Haciendas in Yucatán worked as a European feudal system. They were efficient farms and manufacturing centers producing meat and diverse agricultural products for export. By 19th century, most haciendas produced sisal ropes. Sisal, is a variety of the agave plant, used for everything from rigging on ships to placemats and carpets that we use today.

Haciendas are Mexico's equivalent to American southern plantations, mid-western ranches, and European land estates.

Haciendas became symbols of wealth and culture, adorned in a very specific way with architecture, furnishings and art from around the world.

Haciendas maintained huge fields of henequen, tended by hundreds of men.

The main house (casa principal) was usually the largest building, where the owner (hacendado) kept his living quarters and where most of the administration occurred. Henequen processing took place in the machine house (casa de maquinas). There was usually a chapel (capilla), a house for the foreman (casa del mayordomo), and many other smaller buildings for storage and living quarters.

After the Mexican Revolution and the subsequent invention of synthetic fibers, most haciendas were abandoned to decay in the jungle.

In recent times, they have been "rediscovered" and some haciendas have been renovated into luxury hotels, into restaurants and, in some cases, into museums.

Among the most important, we find; Katanche, Kancabchén, Ochil, Petac, San José Cholul, Santa Rosa, Temozon, Teya and Yaxcopoil that was considered to be one of the most important rustic estates because of its size as well as its magnificence and today, it is a museum.

Cruise shipping and Marine Tourism

Yucatán has marinas, safe harbors, and a port of call.

Sailing in the beautiful water around the coast is an unforgettable experience. You can also have a picnic in a pristine beach enjoying a wonderful sunset. The marina provides excellent shelter and modern facilities. There are windsurfing regattas every weekend during the summer.

Puerto Yucatan, is one of the newest ports for large cruise ships, it has the capacity to serve up to one million passengers. The terminal has immigration offices, customs, shops selling all sorts of souvenirs and necessities, bars, sitting area, duty free shops, car rental and free transportation from the terminal to the port of Progreso. Telephones and Internet connections are available.





Medical Tourism

Merida has an infrastructure of high quality health services. It has a vast network of hospitals, clinics, laboratories, and doctor's offices, all in constant growth and modernization. Therefore guarantees all its clients first-class medical care that has revolutionized the concept of the medical service in the southeast of Mexico.

The hospitality, professionalism in medical care, hospital infrastructure and the cost of medical services make Merida one of the most competitive cities in the provision of high quality medical services. The main private hospitals in Mérida are: Clínica Mérida, Hospital Star Médica, Centro de Especialidades Médicas del Sureste and Centro Médico de las Américas. The rates for health insurance in Mexico are very accessible. You can be protected and use the best hospitals and doctors at very reasonable costs.

Business Travel

Yucatan is a complete tourist destination with a wide variety of tourist attractions. The organizer of congresses, conferences and meetings has many exciting and refreshing options of recreational activities, which is a nice complement to any event. Yucatan offers natural attractions, archeology, history, culture, traditions, legends, and the colonial legacy combined with the ancient indigenous culture, reflected in the Yucatecan cuisine and in the handcrafts and folk art.

Merida, the state capital, offers high quality hotels, modern medical facilities, road safety, international airports and a port of call in Puerto Progreso. Many colonial monuments and archeological sites also surround it.

The Office of Conferences and Conventions (OCC) actively support the organization of events and maintain a close relationship with local service providers and various government agencies. The OCC can prop paperwork and permissions, contact Yucatán state authorities and coordination of cultural events.

The Yucatán Congress and Convention Bureau (OCC) offers a wide range of support services for sector professionals and maintains a close relationship with local service providers and various government agencies. The OCC helps you with the paperwork and permissions, and provides a wide network of locations where you can organize your event.

The Convention Center Yucatan Siglo XXI (Spanish for "21st century"), is a modern facility. With a total surface area of 904,168 square feet, the convention and exposition center has 224,965 square feet of roofed spaces. It has a parking lot, a pressroom, a movie complex and service area.



Map of Yucatán



Symbols

- Airport
- Colonial Architecture
- Sinkhole or Cave
- Cruise Port
- Water Sports
- Watching Flamingos
- Hacienda
- Fishing
- Bird Watching
- Archeological Site

Distances from Mérida:

	Km.	Km.	Km.
Cancún	320	Umán	18
Campeche	253	Yaxcopoil	23
Progreso	36	Sayil	126
Chetumal	456	Kabah	102
Villahermosa	697	Uxmal	80
Ciudad de México	1,150	Isla Mujeres	330
Playa del Carmen	386	Valladolid	160
Tulúm	476	Chichén Itzá	120
		Izamal	72
		Felipe Carrillo Puerto	
		Bahía de la Ascension	
		Reserva de la Biosfera Sian Ka'an	

