



MEXICO'S YUCATÁN



*Educational
Tours*

→ **Discover the Global Classroom**

8 or 10 DAYS

Mexico's Yucatán

Mexico



Number of overnight stays in parentheses. This tour may also be reversed.

Program Fee includes:

- Round-trip airfare
- 7 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms (9 with extension)
- Breakfast and dinner daily
- Full-time EF Tour Director
- 3 sightseeing tours led by licensed local guides: Mérida • Uxmal • Chichén Itzá
- 1 sightseeing tour led by your tour director: Valladolid
- 5 visits to special attractions: Cenote X-Keken • Chichén Itzá • Uxmal Tulum

OPTIONAL:

Cozumel

WITH EXTENSION: All of the above PLUS:

- 1 visit to a special attraction: Chankanaab



Climb to great heights as you discover Yucatán's wonders, such as a Chac-Mool, a stone altar that was originally used for sacrifices to the gods.

Day 1 Cancún

Fly to the Yucatán • Fly south to Cancún, situated at the tip of Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. After clearing customs in Cancún, you are greeted by your EF Tour Director, who will remain with you throughout your stay.

Day 2 Cancún • Mérida

Free time in Cancún • Today, you'll have a few hours of free time to enjoy Cancún's white sandy beaches or explore one of Cancún's many boutiques.

Transfer to Mérida • In the afternoon, a private motorcoach will take you to your hotel in Mérida, capital of the Yucatán state.

Day 3 Mérida

Guided sightseeing of Mérida • An expert local guide introduces you to the sights of Mérida, once the ancient Mayan capital of T'ho. Visit the Government Palace and the adjacent lemon-colored cathedral (partially built from the stones of Mayan temples destroyed by the conquistadors). Recall the colonial era as you pass by the local architecture.

Guided visit to Uxmal • Journey to the ancient Mayan city of Uxmal (pronounced "oosh-mahl"). To this day scientists are still debating why the Maya periodically abandoned their great cities. Although its name means "thrice built," Uxmal was actually built and rebuilt at least five times, with many parts dating from the 6th century. Your tour will show you the most interesting features of this mysterious site. See the Magician's Pyramid, which is said to have been built overnight by a dwarf-magician,

and the Governor's Palace, a stunning testament to Mayan architectural sophistication. You'll also see the fascinating Nunnery Quadrangle and learn about the handprints often attributed to Itzamná, God of the Sky and Sun.

Day 4 Valladolid • Mérida

Guided sightseeing of Chichén Itzá • Journey through the Yucatán to the sacred Mayan city of Chichén Itzá, mysteriously abandoned in the 7th century A.D. One of antiquity's most spectacular ceremonial centers was built here, dedicated to Chac, god of rain. Gaze up at the 365 steps of the mighty pyramid of El Castillo, which once served as a giant calendar more accurate than our own. On your guided tour, also learn about a perilous ballcourt game the Maya played here—players could not touch the ball with their hands as all round objects were considered holy. (Some scientists believe this explains why the wheel was never developed in the area.)

Visit to Cenote X-Keken • Next, visit Cenote X-Keken, a natural well found deep inside a subterranean cave. (Many rivers in the Yucatán flow underground.)

Transfer to Valladolid • Travel to Valladolid, the Yucatán's second-largest city. The town, located on the site of the ancient Mayan city of Zací, fell under Spanish rule in 1543. Here, you'll spend the night.

Day 5 Valladolid • Playa del Carmen

Tour director-led sightseeing of Valladolid

• Halfway between Mérida and Cancún lies Valladolid, a charming colonial city. Your tour director will show you its highlights, which include the caves, stalactites and hanging vines of the Cenote Zací; the 1552 Franciscan monastery of San Bernardino de Siena; and the bustling main square, which hawks those famed Yucatecan dresses.

Transfer to Playa del Carmen • Continue to Playa del Carmen, boasting some of Mexico's prettiest beaches. In addition to its turquoise waters and white sands, Playa del Carmen offers the bustling Ave. 5, a pedestrian strip a block from the ocean that includes interesting shops and cafés.

Day 6 Playa del Carmen

Full-day excursion to Akumal and Tulum

• Enjoy your daylong excursion to Akumal and Tulum. The seaside community of Akumal, whose name means "place of many turtles" in the Mayan language, offers ample opportunity to explore the white sand beaches and the Yalku Lagoon, a popular snorkeling spot for viewing tropical fish. Then continue on to Tulum, a walled Mayan city that managed to fend off attacks by the Spaniards until the 16th century. Within the city walls, you'll find a host of Mayan ruins looming above the Caribbean Sea, including the Temple of the Frescoes and El Castillo.

Day 7 Playa del Carmen

Free day in Playa del Carmen • Take a walk along the beach or rest in a hammock for a day in this tropical paradise.

Optional excursion to Cozumel • Today, opt to participate in a full-day excursion to the Caribbean island of Cozumel, a former Mayan trading center and ceremonial site. Among the many deities the Maya worshiped on this island was the Ixchel, Goddess of Fertility. You'll have the chance to take in the natural splendor of Chankanaab on your included visit to this beautiful national park. Upon arrival to the island by ferry you will see stunning rock formations and lush tropical foliage. Then discover the exquisite underwater world of animal and plant life below the waves. During your free time, you may wish to enjoy the island's famed white-sand beaches and clear waters. Alternatively, you might choose to rent snorkel equipment for an ideal view of the park's marine ecosystem.

Day 8 Home

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport in Cancún, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

EXTENSION

Day 8 Cozumel

Ferry to Cozumel • Board a ferry for your transfer to the Caribbean island of Cozumel.

Day 9 Cozumel

Excursion to National Park of Chankanaab

• Take in the natural splendor of Chankanaab on your excursion to this beautiful national park. On land, see stunning rock formations and lush tropical foliage, then discover the exquisite underwater world of animal and plant life below the waves. You might choose to rent snorkel equipment for an ideal view of the park's marine ecosystem.

Day 10 Home

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions.

See the fascinating age-old ruins left by Mexico's earliest civilizations.





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Itinerary subject to change.

Discover the Global Classroom



Educational Tours

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