

CULTURAL TOURS IN MEXICO

November 2007



**Servicios Culturales
Especializados**

CULTURAL TOURS IN MEXICO CITY

Coyoacán & San Ángel

This magic tour begins at "Plaza de San Jacinto", in a southern suburb known as San Ángel. We will begin strolling through some of the most picturesque narrow streets of this lovely colonial zone.

We'll visit the Templo de San Jacinto, Plaza de los Licenciados and Plaza de los Arcángeles. On Saturday morning, the famous Bazar del Sábado opens its doors to all visitors, offering an extensive variety of handcrafts, paintings, clothes and much more. The bazar is located in one corner of Plaza de San Jacinto.

After our walk in San Ángel, we will explore a XVI century convent which still preserves most of its original architecture: Ex convento del Carmen.

The convent has now become a museum and offers an interesting collection of religious and colonial art, along with superb views of the ancient gardens where monks used to cultivate olives and many different varieties of frutal trees.

After visiting the convent, we'll take our bus to go to another fascinating place in the south of Mexico city; Coyoacán.

Coyoacán was originally inhabited by the Tecpanecas, a tribe of warriors which controlled the supply of drinking water to the capital city of the Aztecs, Tenochtitlan. Eventually, the Aztecs managed to conquer the Tecpanecas and took over the land, creating a large settlement by the shore of the immense lake Texcoco.

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When the Spaniards conquered the Aztecs, Coyoacán became the first village of Spanish architecture to be built in central Mexico.

Our tour will start from Jardín Hidalgo (the main square of Coyoacán) and then we'll walk to the Templo de San Juan Bautista, which was originally built by Franciscan monks and later was sold to Dominicans.

We'll visit the headquarters of what used to be the first town hall of Mexico city (el ayuntamiento), built by orders of conquistador Hernán Cortés. The town hall still works as a public office and is located in another beautiful square, decorated with a French style kiosk and gardens. Later on, we will continue our exploration of Coyoacán in Plaza de la Conchita and from there we're only blocks away from the famous Casa Azul, where Frida Kahlo was born. There is an interesting collection of memorabilia artifacts and personal stuff of both, Frida and Diego Rivera at the Casa Azul, and now it has become an open museum which can be visited any time.

By this time, we'll probably be very hungry, so it would be lunch time! There are many local restaurants and a food market, which offers traditional Mexican dishes...

THE TOUR IS MADE BY PRIVATE VAN AND WALKING.

LENGTH OF OUR TOUR: 5 hours aprox.

(museum tickets are NOT inclusive)

LANGUAGES AVAILABLE : *SPANISH, ENGLISH & FRENCH.*

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National Museum of Anthropology

Considered one of the most important museums of the world, this anthropology museum offers the most extensive exhibition of pre Colombian art of the planet. It has 24 halls distributed by themes, which range from the origins of American man to contemporary ethnic groups of the Mexican Republic.

One day might just not be enough to discover all the wonders the museum has to offer, nevertheless, we can organize the visit according to your very personal interests and focus on those halls you've always wanted to see.

There is Teotihuacan, the recently renovated Mayan hall, Oaxaca and its cultures and, of course, the Aztecs, which is the central hall of the museum.

We invite you to combine your visit to the museum with a tour through the thrilling center of the city, to have a better perspective of historic and contemporary Mexico.

THE TOUR IS MADE BY PRIVATE VAN AND WALKING.

LENGTH OF OUR TOUR: 5 hours aprox

(museum tickets are NOT inclusive)

LANGUAGES AVAILABLE : SPANISH, ENGLISH & FRENCH.

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Museum and Archaeological site of Templo Mayor

The remains of Templo Mayor are only a small percentage of what the great Tenochtitlan used to be, prior to the arrival of the Spanish army, led by captain Cortés. It was the capital city of the Aztec empire, the most powerful civilization of the Americas by the XVI century. A city of magnificent palaces, great temples, gardens, refinement and wealth, upon which the Spaniards built the new capital for the New Spain (old name of Mexico). The site was discovered quite by chance, as some workers from the electricity supply company were excavating to fix a problem with the power lines. They came across a huge stone, decorated with pre Hispanic motives and then they called the Anthropology institute, in order to have some specialists sent over right away. The discovery of Coyolxahuqui (a goddess related to the moon) led archaeologists to one of the most important discoveries of modern times; the remains of Templo Mayor. Next to the excavated site there is a lovely museum, displaying some of the pieces unburied by the scientists who worked in the project, back in the eighties.

We can also combine the visit to the site with a tour inside the Metropolitan Cathedral and the National Palace, which displays some of the most important mural paintings of Diego Rivera.

THE TOUR IS MADE BY PRIVATE VAN AND WALKING.

LENGTH OF OUR TOUR: 5 hours aprox.

(museum tickets are NOT inclusive)

LANGUAGES AVAILABLE : SPANISH, ENGLISH & FRENCH.

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Teotihuacan & Acolman.

Teotihuacan, an ancient name from the Náhuatl dialect that means: "The City of the Gods or the Place where Men become Gods", is one of the most impressive places of the Mexican Republic and, perhaps, the entire world. Along with the Mayan culture, the inhabitants of Teotihuacan offer an enigmatic history to be studied. Now, at the beginning of the XXI century, nobody knows what was their official language or where exactly the Teotihuacanos came from, but one thing is for sure; they developed a great civilization 1,200 years ago.

The city is divided in several sectors and an impressive avenue crosses through from the extreme north to the citadel, located in the south of the gigantic city.

Among the main points of interest we have: the pyramids of the moon and the sun, the temple of Quetzalcóatl, the citadel, the Quetzalpapálotl and the local museum, of recent creation.

It's hard to describe the sensation you get when you're on top of one of the pyramids, the wind begins to blow on your face and the view of the valley is great.

We can grab a bite in one of the local restaurants, known as "la Gruta", as it is inside a real cavern and has been operating since the 30's. There is a nice selection of typical dishes and the service is quite efficient.

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After lunch we will drive towards Acolman, one of the first convents ever built in central Mexico by Spanish monks during the XVI century. Visiting Acolman is like going back in time for some 500 years; we still get the feeling we hear the bells ringing from the belfry, mixed with Gregorian chants sung by the monks and the air is fresh and very thin.

The museum of Acolman still preserves much of its original distribution, the low cloister with the kitchen (you can still see the big fireplace!), the cells where the monks used to sleep, the profundis hall, the dinning room and interesting remains of colonial sculptures and paintings.

THE TOUR IS MADE BY PRIVATE VAN AND WALKING.

LENGTH OF OUR TOUR: 3 hours aprox.

(museum tickets are NOT inclusive)

LANGUAGES AVAILABLE : SPANISH, ENGLISH & FRENCH.

TECHNICAL DATA ABOUT OUR TOURS

- *Our tours are conducted by specialized personnel.
- *Our tours are suitable for all ages (except very young babies).
- *We strongly recommend you to wear comfortable shoes.
- *Some Mexican museums close on monday.

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