

CHIAPAS



2011 - 12

THE FIRST TIME

Undoubtedly, this territory shows the most spectacular landscapes of Mexico as well as many of the most essential ancient Maya cities for any traveler. The ethnic variety and the consequent cultural and gastronomical richness, make the visit to the wonders of Chiapas even more attractive. This is the proposal for those who visit Chiapas for the first time, by El Planeta México.

CHIAPAS

THE FIRST TIME

Day 1.

Flight from México City to Tuxtla Gutiérrez, capital of Chiapas.

SUMIDERO CANYON.



Rocky walls up to one thousand meters high, raise along several kilometers on both sides of the majestic Grijalva River. Hanging from these walls, depending on the season, we can enjoy many waterfalls that will become a beautiful picture in our mind, hard to forget. While navigating through this geologic wonder on a motorboat for two hours, we'll be able to enjoy the sights of crocodiles, iguanas, spider monkeys and many bird species.



The size and magnificence of the landscape will be a good reminder of human size when compared to nature.

CHIAPA DE CORZO.



Chiapa de Corzo is the starting point for a visit to the Sumidero Canyon. The crown fountain in mudejar style, reflecting the Moorish designs of the South of Spain, was built in the 16th century and is the icon of the main plaza, where locals gather every day. The temple and ex-monastery of Santo Domingo is another example of the early colonial architecture in the new world. The traditional Dance of the Parachicos, takes place here during a couple of weeks in January.

Day 2.

SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS.



Chiapanecs affectionately call it *Sancris*. It is a wonderful city full of live and colonial buildings. An evident presence of ethnic diversity is a clear reminder of being in the heart of the central highlands of Chiapas, a region inhabited by numerous indigenous groups who find a commercial hub in San Cristóbal, being the tzotzils and tzeltals the largest representatives. The Cathedral, the temple of Santo Domingo de Guzmán, the market, the amber and jade museums as well as the distinctive neighborhoods are just a few of the must-visit places at the cultural capital of Chiapas, founded in 1528.



Day 3.

SAN JUAN CHAMULA Y ZINACANTÁN.



Inhabited primarily by a numerous tzotzil group, San Juan Chamula's main characteristic is the religious syncretism, which can be clearly seen inside the church of San Juan Bautista. A hypnotic atmosphere, hard to describe is something that has to be experienced by the visitors themselves. The indigenous people of the surrounding villages gather at the market on Saturdays, exhibiting a colorful display of traditional clothing, a real feast to the sight.



If it's about textiles, San Lorenzo Zinacantán distinguishes by the handmade work of the weaver women on waist looms. The colonial church of San Lorenzo is, of course, well worth the visit.

Day 4.

EL CHIFLÓN.



Still far away from our next destination, driving through sugarcane fields, it is possible to have a view of one of the most spectacular waterfalls of the country, El Chiflón. Actually, it is a series of cascades flowing through the mountains and jumping into a beautiful turquoise river. After a nice walk surrounded by the forest, we'll find ourselves before the power of water. Nothing compares to be right in front of the main falls (the bridal veil) that tumbles more than 100 meters down a vertical cliff and to feel the refreshing mist over the face while hearing its deafening sound.



MONTEBELLO LAKES.



It is hard to believe what our eyes see in the Montebello Lakes National Park. A series of bodies of water, very close to each other, surprisingly different in color which change depending on their depth, the type of soil at their bottom, the vegetation and the sunlight. The surrounding pine and oak forest perfectly frames this multicolor palette of nature.



COMITÁN.

This pleasant and cool city is where some illustrious persons of the Mexican history and arts were born, like Belisario Domínguez and Rosario Castellanos. The vibrant town square is surrounded by the Temple of Santo Domingo, the Municipal Palace and narrow streets with many colonial buildings and monuments of diverse architectural styles.



Day 5.

AGUA AZUL FALLS.

About one third of Mexico's water resources are in Chiapas. It is evidently a land where water is abundant: from hundreds of kilometers of coast washed by the Pacific Ocean to dozens of rivers, -among which we find two of the largest of the country-, from multicolored lakes to countless waterfalls, being Agua Azul the most magnificent of them. This wonderful series of cascades runs through the exuberant vegetation showing off its incredible turquoise color that only changes when the homonymous river becomes a turbulent flow of power during the rainy season.



MISOL-HÁ

The cascade of Misol-Há is another example worth to visit. A big natural cave lets us walk behind the water curtain and contemplate the dense forest that frames the pool.



PALENQUE .

It is very difficult to declare what is the most stunning archaeological site of the Maya world. However, Palenque is certainly one of the top three not only because its importance during its time at splendor, but also because of what we can witness nowadays in it.



Located in the middle of the jungle, Palenque can easily leave the most expert traveler breathless. Some of the most transcendent archaeological findings of the pre hispanic Mexico have taken place here, particularly in terms of architecture and sculpture. The most representative structures are the Palace, the Temples of the Cross group and the Temple of the Inscriptions which was built as the funerary monument of one of the most famous rulers of the city, Pakal the Great.



Day 6.

YAXCHILÁN.



Navigating the Usumacinta River, natural border between Mexico and Guatemala, we reach the impressive site of Yaxchilán, strategically built at different levels on the hills on the bank of the river, adapting the structures to the local topography.



Yaxchilán rivaled with Palenque and Tikal during the Classic period and it's been particularly known for the sculpted stelae and lintels, containing beautiful representations of the ruling class and hieroglyphic texts describing historic events of the city. The magic of Yaxchilán is felt when you hear the imposing sound of the howler monkeys.

BONAMPAK.

A journey through Chiapas wouldn't be complete without a visit to Bonampak, famous for the fantastic and very well preserved Maya murals that show actual events like ceremonies, religious rituals and war scenes. The frescos date from the 8th century and were made in three separate rooms of the so-called structure 1.



Day 7.

Transfer to Villahermosa, capital city of the state of Tabasco where you'll take your flight back to Mexico City.



INCLUSIONS

3 night accommodation in San Cristóbal de Las Casas.

1 night accommodation en Comitán.

2 night accommodation in Palenque.

Daily breakfast.

Private Ground Transportation during the whole trip.

Motor boat ride (collective) at the Sumidero Canyon.

Motor boat ride (collective) to/from Yaxchilán.

Entrance fees to all sites.

Private guide.

24/7 assistance.

EXCLUSIONS

International and domestic flights, tips and personal expenses.



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