

EXPLORE!



Kingdom of the Maya

15 days

Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico - Trip code DMX

Kingdom of the Maya

We cross Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico on this trip of some of the most spectacular ancient Maya sites. Staying in comfortable hotels, we discover hidden Maya cities deep in the rainforest and visit beautiful colonial towns. Sites visited include the Maya-Toltec site of Chichen Itza, the enchanting site of Palenque set in dense jungle, the Maya metropolis of Tikal, and Copan, one of the best preserved sites in Central America.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Antigua** - Explore this elegant colonial city
- ★ **Copan** - Discover one of the greatest Maya ruins in the Americas
- ★ **Tikal (Guatemala)** - The Maya metropolis where temples scattered over a vast area stand out tall above the surrounding jungle
- ★ **Palenque** - Arguably the most enchanting of the ancient Maya ruins, set in dense jungle
- ★ **Chichen Itza** - A spectacular Maya Toltec site, now declared one of 'The New Seven Wonders of the World'

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Premium

Our premium accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.



Why book this trip

This tour is ideal for travellers who are interested in travelling through Guatemala and Mexico in comfort. Staying in upgraded hotels throughout the trip, it's an opportunity to see some of the Maya world's best-preserved sites, including the jungle-clad Palenque and Tikal, culminating in the famed ruins of Chichen Itza.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 14



Transport

Bus
Boat



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Boat Crew
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)

Trip information

Country information

Guatemala

Climate

In the high plains (1524m-1981m) the climate is temperate all year round. In lower areas the climate is semi-tropical. The mountains can be cool especially at night. In general, the dry season in Guatemala lasts from Nov - April. From May to October there are often fine mornings and clear evenings but afternoon rains tend to be heavy. The Peten lowlands tend to be rainy all year round though less so from February to April.

Time difference to GMT

-6

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Catholic and Protestant

Language

Spanish

Honduras

Climate

Climate change varies depending upon altitude. Mid range temperatures reach about 28°C. Rainfall is low to moderate with May to October being the wettest season. Temperature ranges in the lower reaches of the slopes and along the coast are more constant, with less rainfall.

Time difference to GMT

-6

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Roman Catholic and Protestant

Language

Spanish

Mexico

Climate

Mexico is a vast country whose weather varies by season and region. The optimum time to travel is generally between December and April when rainfall is at a minimum. Temperatures are coolest between December and February and temperatures start to rise from March and the hottest months are May, June and July. The rainy season runs from May until October when humidity and temperatures are highest. The rains tend to be intense and short, clearing the humidity before building up again. The Caribbean coast can be affected by hurricane season between June and November. Please bear in mind that at altitude the temperatures can drop considerably at night and sudden changes can occur at any time.

Time difference to GMT

-6

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Roman Catholic, Protestant

Language

Spanish is the official language, but around 50 languages/dialects are also spoken by the indigenous peoples of Mexico.

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Antigua - Chichicastenango (non market day) and Panajachel US\$70 inc boat (min. 7 pers);

Copan - Macaw Mountain US\$ 10; Museum of Sculpture US\$ 7; Visit tunnels US\$ 15

Rio Dulce - US\$35 (5 pers), US\$20 (10 pers)

Tikal - Sunset tour on arrival - US\$ 15

Palenque - Misol Ha us\$ 15 pp

Chichen Itza - Ik Kill Cenote swim - US\$ 10

Merida - Excursion to Celestun US\$135 (min 5 pers) inc. lunch; Dzibilchaltun US\$60 inc. guide; Mundo Maya Museum US\$25;

Clothing

Lightweight clothing is essential though a warmer sweater is advisable for cooler evenings in the highlands. A waterproof is essential. The jungle lowlands are hot and muggy, and it can rain at any time of year. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts are recommended on jungle walks. Don't forget swimwear.

Footwear

Comfortable walking boots or shoes and trainers or sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a daysac. Please remember not to overload yourself.

Equipment

Bring a torch, water bottle, insect repellent, high factor sunscreen, camera, a waterproof bag for your camera and motion sickness

tablets/patches for the boat. Binoculars are very useful for bird and animal spotting. An umbrella can be useful in short downpours.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow US\$60, - 15% is expected in restaurants.

International Departure Taxes

Guatemala: there is an entry tax of US\$2 / exit tax US\$2

Honduras: there is an entry tax US\$5.

Mexico: there is an exit tax of US\$35.

Country Information

Guatemala

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Dinner price

£8.00 - 10.00

Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

Water price

£1.00 - 2.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Quetzal

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Honduras

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£7

Dinner price

£10

Beer price

£1.75

Water price

£2

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Lempira

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Mexico

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Breakfast price

£5

Lunch price

£7

Dinner price

£13

Beer price

£2

Water price

£0.7

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Mexican New Peso

Recommended Currency For Exchange

We recommend to take a minimum equivalent of GBP 300 - 400 of your total spending money in cash for a two / three week trip (approx. GBP 200 for the CMX). USD are not widely accepted in stores and restaurants however they can be exchanged in all major towns and cities. Sterling can only be exchanged in Mexico City. Mexican cash can be obtained from ATMs that are available in most major cities. Sterling or Dollar notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange. MX/MXY/MXS customers – on arrival in Mexico city airport we recommend that you use one of the many ATM's at the airport to directly get local currency, or change GBP or USD at a currency exchange for the start of your trip. For those continuing to Guatemala on the MX/Y we also recommend you change approximately GBP 50-60 into Guatemalan Quetzals at Mexico city airport as there is no longer an exchange at the border crossing into Guatemala.

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Mexico: Citizens from UK, New Zealand, Australia, US and Canada require a Mexican Tourist Card to enter. This is obtained from the consular office or at the check-in desk of the airline you are travelling with and will need to be kept until exit.

Guatemala: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Honduras: Citizens from UK, New Zealand, Australia and most E.U nationals do not require a visa. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are

leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit)

For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Guatemala

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Honduras

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Mexico

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
