



MÉRIDA, SOUTHERN CULTURAL AND CULINARY CAPITAL CITY

The capital city of Yucatán is the starting point for travel around the State. It was founded in 1542 and built on the ancient Mayan city of **T'ho**. It stands out because of its wide variety of cultural and artistic attractions, its colonial historic downtown with architectural European influence, highlighted by the French-style manor houses located in Paseo de Montejo, the most important avenue in the city.



CULTURE AND CUISINE

The **geography** and **history** of the Yucatán Peninsula kept it isolated from events in the rest of Mexico; thus, its cultural expressions evolved independently, influenced in many cases by the commercial contact with European countries, North America, and The Caribbean.

The **Yucatecan Trova** highlights musical rhythms such as bambuca, bolero, jarana, cloves, jaropa among others.

Traditional clothes are used for galas in festivities. Dresses embroidered by hand, shine in the **vaquería** dances and in social parties, in more elegant and stylish models, complemented with gold jewelry in filigree and shawls.



Discover its churches, like the **San Ildefonso Cathedral**, one of the most ancient in Latin America. The History, tradition, cuisine and squares, where you will feel like a local.

Awarded as the **"Best Small City in the World"** by Condé Nast Traveller Magazine in 2019, it is included in the best 20 destinations to travel to in 2021 by Forbes Magazine.

Mérida has a wide variety of cuisines and free daily cultural and artistic activities, such as:

Vaquería Yucateca
Serenade in Santa Lucía
Mayan ball game "pok ta pok"

Must-visit places

- Peón Contreras Theatre
- San Ildefonso Cathedral
- Gran Museo del Mundo Maya (Mayan World Great Museum)
- Museo Regional de Antropología e Historia de Yucatán en el Palacio Cantón (Yucatan Anthropology and History Regional Museum at Cantón Palace)
- Palacio de la Música (Music Palace)
- Museo de la Canción Yucateca (Yucatecan Song Museum)
- Casa Montejo (Montejo Manor)
- Iglesia de la Tercera Orden (Church of the Third Order)
- Museo Casa Manzanero (Manzanero Manor Museum)
- Montejo 495 Casa Museo (Montejo 495 Museum Manor)



One of the most important festivities is the one dedicated to death, known as **Hanal Pixán** "Food for the souls". It takes place on November 1st and 2nd, when you can admire the colorful tradition.

Food is one of the reasons for the enthusiasm of people visiting Yucatán. The wide variety, the history of the dishes, and the endemic ingredients make the Yucatecan cuisine an important element for any visitor. The **cochinita pibil**, **salbutes**, **panuchos**, **popadzules**, **sopa de lima**, **pavo en relleno negro** or **chilmole** and **queso relleno**, as well as **poc-chuc** are some of the regional traditional dishes that you cannot miss, even though contemporary food is currently booming for its diversity and mix of ingredients and flavors.



ADVENTURE AND NATURE



If you enjoy nature, green rainforests, fascinating fauna, and dreamlike beaches and seas... Yucatán is your ideal destination. You will be charmed by the warm weather, perfect for adventures, challenges, and many activities full of emotions. There is no need to go far or get lost in the rainforest, nature lives in Yucatán and you can see it in many places. Yucatán has **rainforests**, **coasts**, **cenotes**, **grottos**, **mangroves**, and **rivers** that will make you forget the sound of big cities.

Travel along any of the 3 biosphere reserves: **Celestún**, **Rio Lagartos**, and **Petenes**, where you can participate in activities such as flora and fauna sighting, kayaking, among others.

Must-visit places

- Kayaking in mangroves and rivers.
- Flamingo sighting in Celestún and Rio Lagartos.
- Swimming and diving in cenotes.
- Water activities like sport fishing, kitesurf, paddle board, among others.
- Photo tour with flora and fauna sighting.
- Las Coloradas tour.
- Hiking or biking among local communities.
- Exploration and descent in grottos and a myriad of unique experiences.

Yucatán has approximately 234.8 miles of coasts and summer-like climate all year long, inviting people to have a good time, practice water sports, and many other activities.



Visit our Yucatecan coasts where you will find white sandy beaches, green waters, exquisite cuisine, **ecotourism activities**, hand-made crafts, and tours, as well as water sports like **snorkeling** and **paddle boarding**.

For **bird** lovers, Yucatán has a diversity of species including migratory birds, 14 of which are endemic. You cannot miss to seeing the **Toh** bird, a beautiful specimen that will captivate you for its colors and pendulum-like tail.



ARCHEOLOGY

Yucatán has an enormous historical legacy comparable to many other territories in the world; rich in culture and traditions. In its territory you can find magnificent cities and ceremonial centers with buildings made from carved stone, and a detailed and perfect architecture.

In its 18 archeological sites, built in different periods and under diverse architectural styles, you will learn about the heritage of one of the greatest civilizations in the world, the great Mayan Culture.

Of all the American cultures that have existed, the Mayan culture was the largest in time, long-standing due to their advanced knowledge in different sciences, and the only culture capable of developing a writing system based in glyphs. Some of their most interesting contributions are:

- Great mathematicians who invented the zero and had a vigesimal numbering.
- They invented the only complete hieroglyphic writing system in the pre-Columbian Americas.
- They developed a self-knowledge in arts, architecture, astronomy, and medicine.
- They made the most exact calendar, which is considered one of their greatest contributions to humanity.



Unique Experiences

- In the **spring and autumn equinoxes**, March 21st and between September 21st and 23rd, respectively, you can witness two projection phenomena through the Seven Dolls Temple in Dzibilchaltún and over the Kukulcan Castle in Chichén Itzá.
- **Noches de Kukulcan** in Chichén Itzá and the light and sound show in Uxmal.

Must-visit places

- **Chichén Itzá**, declared World Human Heritage by UNESCO in 1988 and one of the New 7 World Wonders since 2007, has the most impressive creation of all: Kukulcan Castle.
- **Uxmal**, known as "the Three Times Built", declared as World Human Heritage by UNESCO in 1996.
- In the **Puuc Route** you can visit 6 archeological sites and 2 grottos: Uxmal, Kabah, Sayil, X-Lapak, Labná, Oxkintok, Calcehtok Grotto and Loltún Grotto.
- The archeological sites of **Dzibilchaltún** and **Xcambó**, located near the city of Mérida are perfect for a quick day out.

HACIENDAS

During 19th Century, most of the haciendas in Yucatán were devoted to the sisal production, known in those times as green gold, which was exported as rope, string, or chard. Sisal was processed in the machine house and the hacienda usually had a chapel, the steward house, and many other small properties for storage.

The trip into Yucatán would be incomplete if no Haciendas are visited. Most of them have been turned into beautiful luxury hotels, museums that provide a glance to the colonial times. Many others have not been refurbished, creating special landscapes for picture lovers, or for people looking for different places for their weddings or events.



In the last decade of the 19th Century, the haciendas recovered their boom and glory, now as perfect places for resting and meditating in harmony, but mainly to offer unparalleled experiences in accommodation, cuisine, leisure, and all kind of events.

Must-visit Haciendas

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|----------------------------|---------------------|
| ■ H. Choká | ■ H. Santa Lucía |
| ■ H. Chenché de las Torres | ■ Kantonya |
| ■ H. Mucuyché | ■ H. Sotuta de Peón |
| ■ H. Museo Yaxcopoil | ■ H. Temozón |
| ■ H. San Diego Cutz | ■ H. Teya |
| ■ H. San Antonio Millet | ■ H. Xtepén |
| ■ H. San Pedro Ochil | ■ H. Yunkú |
| ■ H. San José Cholul | ■ H. Zamná |

CENOTES

From the maya **dzonoof**, which means "hole with water", cenotes are proof of the fascinating nature in Yucatán. A cenote is a natural pit of crystal-clear waters, sacred for the Mayan people, as they represented the door to the underworld or "Xibalbá". In Yucatán, there are more than 3 thousand cenotes, but only around 100 can be visited by tourists.

There are cenotes for all preferences, options go from those administered by cooperatives and communities to those which are private and combine the experience with activities such as flora and fauna sighting, free swimming, snorkeling, rappel, zipline, cave diving, and kayak. Some cenotes preserve archeological remains as they were Mayan ceremonial centers.

There are different kinds of cenotes: open, enclosed, semi-enclosed or with caves; some of the most visited are:

Enclosed cenotes

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|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| ■ Balmi | ■ Samulá | ■ Tsukán |
| ■ Canunchén | ■ San Ignacio | ■ Tza Ujun Kat |
| ■ Chihuan | ■ Santa Rosa | ■ Xkekén |
| ■ Sambulá | ■ Suytún | ■ Yaal Utzil |

Open cenotes

- | | | |
|----------|----------------|----------|
| ■ Ik Kil | ■ Sta. Bárbara | ■ Xcajum |
| ■ Kikil | ■ X'batún | ■ Xlocab |
| ■ Lol Há | ■ X'Canché | ■ Zaci |



PUEBLOS MÁGICOS

Valladolid

It is a colonial city located between Mérida and Cancun, only 24.8 miles from Chichén Itzá. It has important properties of civil and religious architecture, among which the fortified San Bernardino de Siena Convent or its San Servacio Church stand out from other monuments. Near Valladolid you will find spectacular cenotes to enjoy nature with all services.

Must-see places

- Cenotes like: **Agua Dulce**, **Hubiku**, **Saamal**, **Samulá**, **Suytún**, **X'kekén**, **Zaci** and many others.
- La Frailes Road.
- San Bernardino de Siena Convent.
- Regarding cuisine: **Limitos** and **longaniza**.
- Videomapping "Nights of the Heroic Valladolid".



Izamal

Forty-six miles away from Mérida, you will find the magic town of Izamal, which means "dew descending from the sky". Known as the city of the Three Cultures, because three historical periods converge together: prehispanic, colonial and the present, all of them in one color: yellow.

Must-see places

- San Antonio de Padua Franciscan monastery, with the second largest enclosed atrium in the world.
- The videomapping show "Light trails", projected over manors and the monastery.
- Its archeological site and the "Kinich Kak Moo" pyramid.
- Recommended traditional dish: Deer Tzic.



Maní

Maní is located 62.1 miles southeast of Mérida. It is a place where visitors feel as if time had come to a halt, and it is known for the architecture of the church and ancient San Miguel Arcángel monastery, built in the 16th Century. Local craftsmen are devoted to the manufacture and embroidering of blouses, huipiles (traditional blouses or dresses), and ternos (suits).

Poc Chuc is the emblematic traditional dish.

Must-see places

- San Miguel Arcángel Church and Monastery, with a spectacular open chapel.
- Embroidered handcrafts
- Recommended traditional dish: Poc Chuc.



Sisal

Located 34.7 miles from Mérida, this fishing village in the Yucatecan Riviera is a hidden jewel. It was the first port for all the peninsula and the place where sisal was exported during its boom. The main activity is fishing; thus, their delicious cuisine is based on sea products. It has a lagoon parallel to the quiet beach with waters which range from blue to emerald green. You will find a lot of wild animals like crocodiles, crabs, herons, ducks, flamingos, among many others. Near the village, you will find the ecological reserve "El Palmar".

Must-see places

- A fortress of the colonial period, with a lighthouse.
- The ancient customs office.
- A walk through the pier with its "Confidente" chairs.
- Fishing, diving, snorkeling and flora and fauna.



REGIONS OF YUCATÁN:

MAYAN WORLD
CAPITAL
REGION

MÉRIDA; CULTURAL CAPITAL
AND SOUTHERN GASTRONOMY
REGION

CENOTES &
HACIENDAS
REGION

PUUC ROUTE AND
MAYAN VILLAGES
REGION

YUCATÁN
RIVIERA
REGION

MAYAN
PORT
REGION

YUCATÁN

