

VERANO IN MÉXICO

MÉXICO CITY TOUR

8 Days

May 28, 2023, to June 4, 2023
REGISTRATION DEADLINE FEBRUARY 28TH



The tour will afford an unparalleled opportunity to explore Mexico's pre-Columbian, Spanish Colonial, Post-Independence, and post-Revolutionary past. Mexico's diverse and lively capital is layered with 1,600 years of culture, art, and history, with one civilization built upon another. Aztec ruins, with their rugged stones, lie uncovered at the Templo Mayor, once the thriving center of Moctezuma's empire. Today the 16th century Catedral Metropolitana and the Palacio Nacional occupy that space with their intricate Baroque façades adorning one of the world's largest plazas, the Zócalo.

COVID PROTOCOLS: We intend to be as careful as possible with your health, therefore, we will adhere to the following guidelines during the tour. All tour members are required to wear face masks in indoor common areas and on the tour bus. Tour members are expected to be fully vaccinated; proof of vaccinations and current boosters will be required upon registration.

TOUR LEADERS – University of Arizona Professor Emeritus Todd Fletcher and Tucson Photographer and Freelance Writer Dan Chavez. **Tour size 18-24** participants.

DAY ONE Arrival – For those arriving before 5:30 PM, you will be met by your tour leader at the airport to facilitate ground transportation to the hotel. Those arriving after 5:30 PM can book a taxi at one of the many airport taxi stands in the terminal. The tour will reimburse you for the cost of the taxi. **Get acquainted group social hour provided.**

DAY TWO Pyramids at Teotihuacán – Located 25 miles northeast of Mexico City, Teotihuacán was the largest Mesoamerican city in the pre-Columbian Americas, with a population estimated at 125,000 or more. **Agave Demonstration** – Traditionally, agave was believed to have medicinal properties. The demo will discuss the various uses of this versatile plant. **Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe** – According to tradition, this was the site where Mary, Mexico's most beloved religious and cultural image, appeared to an Aztec convert nearly 500 years ago. The shrine is one of the most visited churches in the world, second only to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. **Breakfast and group lunch provided.**

DAY THREE Anthropology Museum – This is the largest and most visited museum in Mexico, chronicling pre-Columbian Mesoamerican civilizations that were located on what is now the current territory of Mexico. **Chapultepec Castle** – Is the historic site where the Niños Héroes died defending the hilltop in 1847 during the Mexican-American War. **Breakfast provided.**

DAY FOUR Templo Mayor – You will have the opportunity to walk the site of the main temple of the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan located adjacent to Mexico City's Zócalo, or Central Square. **Palacio Nacional & Rivera Murals** – The Palacio Nacional is a splendid example of Colonial architecture and is located in the City's main square, El Zócalo. The historic site has been a palace for Mexico's rulers since the days of the Aztec empire, the Colonial period, and today. **Catedral Metropolitana** – Consecrated in 1653, the cathedral was ordered built atop the Templo Mayor by the conquistadors as a further show of domination, using most of the Templo Mayor's stones in its construction. **Breakfast and group lunch provided.**

Our evening will include a performance by Amalia Hernandez's renowned **Ballet Folklórico de México** in the iconic Palacio de Bellas Artes. Internationally acclaimed, this uniquely Mexican troupe has toured in over 60 countries and 300 cities worldwide.

DAY FIVE Museo Frida Kahlo Casa Azul – Kahlo's historic house and art museum are dedicated to her life and work. You will tour the private rooms of the house and its vivid expression of post-revolutionary Mexicanismo. **Plaza Coyoacán, Parque Centenario & Artisan Market** – this charming plaza and park are lined with cafés and restaurants. The north side features a Mexican folk-art market where you will have time for shopping. **Floating Gardens of Xochimilco** – This picturesque network of canals, with its colorful trajineras, or gondola-like boats, bordered by gardens serves as a vivid reminder of the City's pre-Columbian legacy (shopping). **Breakfast provided.**

DAY SIX Museo de la Revolución – Located underground below the 1938 Art Deco Monument to the Revolution, the museum covers a 63-year period, from the implementation of the constitution guaranteeing human rights in 1857 to the

installation of the post-revolutionary government in 1920. Stroll the historical **Parque Alameda Central** and **Juarez Memorial** – The Alameda Central, created in 1592, is the oldest public park in the Americas. The Juarez Neoclassical monument commemorates the Mexican statesman Benito Juárez and his political success in leading the country through turbulent times. **Palacio de Bellas Artes and Mexico's Muralists** – This iconic cultural and performance venue's Art Nouveau style was favored by Mexico's President Porfirio Diaz. It also houses brilliant works by Mexico's most famous 20th century muralists, including Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros, and more. **Casa de Azulejos** – Built in the late 1500s by a Count, this former residence is an incredible example of Colonial architecture distinguished by its façade covered on three sides by blue and white tiles. Today it is home to Sanborn's Department store offering great dining and shopping experiences. After lunch, you will have the afternoon free to explore the wonder of Mexico City on your own. Your tour leaders will be available to provide you with various options. **Breakfast provided.**

DAY SEVEN Mercado Jamaica – Best known for its over 1,100 flower vendors, it is considered one of the 15 most beautiful flower markets in the world. **Bazar Sábado` Plaza San Jacinto** – This colorful Saturday bazaar is housed in an 18th-century home, and the surrounding plaza features many vendors selling fine art, jewelry, textiles, and pottery. There is also a wide variety of delightful cafés and restaurants for having lunch. **Museo de Arte Popular** – A major showcase for folk art from across Mexico housing eye-popping beautiful works that cover the country's history and many cultures. **Breakfast and farewell dinner provided.**

DAY EIGHT – Departure, ground transportation provided from your hotel to the Autobuses del Norte (North Bus Terminal) for transit to Guanajuato. **Breakfast provided before departure.**

TOUR INCLUDES

- ✓ Transfers to and from the airport to the hotel (for those traveling on scheduled arrival & departure dates).
- ✓ Accommodations for seven nights at the Hotel Casa Gonzales.
- ✓ Double occupancy rooms; single occupancy available for an additional fee.
- ✓ Seven daily breakfasts, one group happy hour, two group lunches, and two group dinners.
- ✓ Server tips for group meals.
- ✓ Admissions to all museums, tours, and sites.
- ✓ Expert licensed guides at all museums and archeological sites.
- ✓ Ground transportation to all museums, tours, and sites.
- ✓ **AIRFARE NOT INCLUDED**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Your tour leaders will make every effort to conduct the tour as advertised. Every effort will be made to carry out all the activities as planned. However, in the event of unforeseen circumstances or events beyond our control, we reserve the right to make adjustments, modifications, or deletions to the itinerary and/or accommodations that may be deemed necessary. You will need a valid passport with at least six months validity prior to expiration and with blank pages for immigration stamps.

TOUR LEADERS BIO'S

Todd Fletcher is a Distinguished Outreach Professor and Professor Emeritus in the College of Education at UArizona. He completed his undergraduate degree at the Universidad de las Americas in Puebla, Mexico, and has done research in Mexico and throughout Latin America during his academic career. For the past 30+ years, he has led a study-abroad program to Mexico, taking University students on a 7-week educational tour of Mexico. He is the founder of Resplandor International, an educational non-profit that operates in a rural area outside of Guanajuato, Mexico. Fletcher's command of Mexico's culture, language, and people will broaden and enrich the tour as you experience Mexico's expansive history and magnificent sights.

Dan Chavez is a Tucson-based commercial photographer and freelance writer whose passion for photography began as a teenager. Chavez has been working as a commercial photographer since 2013. He began freelance writing in 2015 with a focus on the beauty and diversity of Hispanic culture and traditions. Chavez's interests have allowed him to travel extensively, researching and exploring Colonial Mexico's, Argentina's, Peru's, Cuba's, and Spain's cultures and traditions. Having visited Mexico City over the years on ten occasions, he is knowledgeable about the city's historical and cultural highlights. His experience and insight, along with his enthusiasm and curiosity, will give you a unique and informed perspective on the tour.

TOUR PACE AND ACTIVITY LEVEL

If we had to rate the tour's activity and pace levels, overall, on a scale of 1 to 10, the activity would be a level 5-6; travelers should be able to leisurely walk 1 to 2 miles, which includes climbing one or two flights of stairs and walking over uneven pavement, or cobblestones. In addition, standing up for up to one to two hours may be required at some of the sites. Regarding the pace, on a scale of 1 to 10, the tour is moderate or level 5-6, with our itinerary, typically including three sites

daily, allowing for a 90-minute lunch/rest break. There are two evening outings planned on days 4 and 7. Most, if not all, the venues offer benches and seating should you need to rest for a few minutes or catch your breath. Throughout each day, there should be ample opportunities to purchase bottled water at tour sites, kiosks, or mini-marts, as well as restroom breaks at venues and restaurants.

The itinerary calls for departing the hotel each morning between 8:30-9:00 am and returning to the hotel between 5:00 to 5:30 pm daily. On the evening of day 4, we will be going back out to attend a performance of the Ballet Folklórico, returning to the hotel at approximately 10:30 pm. Day 5 will be the longest of the tour's days, likely returning to the hotel around 6:30-7:00 pm. Although day 5 is a longer day, on a scale of 1 to 10, the activity level is probably only a 3-4 and the pace a 2-3. That day's relaxed lunch at Plaza Coyoacán, with its sidewalk cafes and restaurants, will allow time for relaxing before visiting the Floating Gardens of Xochimilco, allowing for a leisurely level 1 or 2 activity with a 1-hour *trajinera* (gondola) cruise through the remnants of ancient waterways and canals with opportunities for food, libations, and music. On the evening of day 7 the group will be going out in the evening for a group farewell dinner returning to the hotel at approximately 9:30 pm. Please take this into consideration when booking your airline departure time as the following morning, you should plan on leaving the hotel 3 hours before your international departure time.

MISCELLANEOUS

The tour's Hotel Casa Gonzalez is located in the Cuauhtémoc neighborhood, with the British Embassy across the street, the US Embassy 2 blocks away, and the Zona Rosa nearby (known for its shopping, cafés, and nightlife), making the area a relatively safe place for visitors and tourists. The hotel has been recognized with shout-outs in Lonely Planet and in a recent New York Times 36 Hours in Mexico City article. Like any large city, to avoid being a target of crime, tourists need to be cautious, aware of their surroundings, dress inconspicuously, and not carry excessive amounts of cash.

Upon arrival in Mexico City, tour participants will receive an informational handout with the hours of operation, telephone nos., and addresses of the nearby pharmacy, urgent care, and hospital. Also, the hotel has a registered Nurse "On Call" 24 hours daily. She is available to come to the hotel to assist guests who may become ill.

