



📍 Enchiladas, Mexico

MEXICO CULINARY TOUR

By land: Mexico City to Oaxaca

A full-flavoured culinary tour of Mexico, visiting Mexico's richest culinary regions. After sampling and sight-seeing our way around Mexico City, the tour winds through the streets of Puebla to local attractions including the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Oaxaca.

We will also visit a Mezcal factory and learn about the fermentation process, walk through traditional villages of historical importance and continue to enjoy traditional and more modern styles of Mexican cuisine.

Single supplements available!
Call your local Merit Travel expert.

9 nights

📍 **\$4,595*** p.p.

Departs Toronto/Vancouver:
Apr. 16, 2020

Group size 24 maximum

✔ What's Included:

- * Roundtrip airfare
- Plaza Premium airport lounge pass
- Nine nights 4-star hotel accommodation
- Nine breakfasts, five lunches and five dinners
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Private motor coach transportation
- Local English-speaking tour guide
- Merit Travel tour host**
- All taxes and gratuities



ACTIVITY LEVEL:
SIGHT-SEEING

APPROPRIATE FOR:

Travellers who are physically fit and comfortable with longer days of touring by transport and by foot and do not require mobility aids.

Your Itinerary | Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner = (B, L, D)

DAY 1 | Apr. 16, 2020 | Toronto/Vancouver - Mexico City

Depart Toronto or Vancouver for Mexico City. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel and check-in.

Overnight at Historico Central or similar (4 nights)

DAY 2 | Apr. 17, 2020 | Mexico City (B)

After breakfast, join a walking tour to explore Mexico City's Historical Centre with its beautiful baroque buildings, including the Cathedral and the National Palace that surround the Zócalo (Constitution Square).

Throughout the day, learn about the local cuisine, as you start your gastronomic adventure through the traditional flavours of Mexico, from pre-Hispanic food to contemporary culinary dishes. Explore a typical Mexican marketplace, enjoy a refreshing beverage in a typical cantina and indulge in sampling the street food as you go!

Return to your hotel in the evening.

DAY 3 | Apr. 18, 2020 | Mexico City - Teotihuacán (B, L, D)

Breakfast at your hotel. Depart for the Pre-Hispanic UNESCO World Heritage Centre of Teotihuacán, the most important archeological site in the Valley of Mexico. The Teotihuacán Civilization lived in this city between the 1st and 6th century A.D and it's believed their cultural influence extended far south into Guatemala and into the Mayan civilisation. Burned in the 8th century A.D., Teotihuacán was already a great field of ruins when the Aztecs found it and due to its size, they attributed its construction to Gods or giants. The site has three large structures along the Avenue of the Dead which we will learn the importance and history of, including The Pyramid of the Sun, The Pyramid of the Moon and The Citadel. The three structures

demonstrate the architectural skill and astronomical knowledge of the Teotihuacán civilisation.

For lunch, we will dine at the restaurant, Gran Teocalli where we will learn more about the principal component of many internationally popular and lesser known local Mexican dishes whilst being guided through preparing traditional guacamole sauce and our own corn dough tortillas.

In the afternoon, stop by a cooperative food factory in the small town of San Martín de las Pirámides, where jam, honey, candy and spicy sauces from opuntia cacti fruit are produced. Next, we stop at an obsidian workshop where you can taste a local liquor called pulque, from the agave plant whilst watching the raw volcanic glass being processed to shape unique accessories and keepsakes. Return to Mexico City and in the evening, enjoy dinner at the upscale Nueve Nueve Bistro. Found in the heart of the Colonia Roma, the city's trendiest neighbourhood, this restaurant fuses the modern internal design from the Mexican architect Javier Sordo de Haro with the original architecture of this manor, dating from the early 20th century. This Mexican bistro offers a menu based on dishes from different regions in Mexico, prepared by renowned Mexican chefs Luis Durán and Mónica Beteta.

DAY 4 | Apr. 19, 2020 | Mexico City (B, L, D)

Breakfast at your hotel. Depart for the south of the city and visit the colonial neighbourhood of Coyoacán, a residential area of Mexico where high society lived in beautiful haciendas in the countryside. Visit La Casa Azul, also known as the Frida Kahlo Museum, where the most renowned Latin American artist lived.

For lunch, we will dine on traditional Mexican food in traditional and modern combinations, at the restaurant Los Danzantes, located in the heart of Coyoacán. In the afternoon, enjoy a boat ride on a Trajinera along the pre-Hispanic canals of Xochimilco, Mexico City's Floating Gardens where you will hear about the historical importance of Xochimilco for the Toltec people from Tula.

In the evening, dine at excitingly modern Biko, rated in the top 50 of Latin America's best restaurants in 2017.

DAY 5 | Apr. 20, 2020 | Mexico City - Puebla (B, L, D)

After breakfast at the hotel we will check-out and depart for Cholula (approx. two-hour drive), known for centuries as one of the largest cities in Mesoamerica located on the main trade route for obsidian, pottery



and tropical goods. Admire the pyramid Tlachihualtepec, “Handmade Mountain”, which the Cholulan people, dedicated to the Gods of rain.

Continue to the colonial city of Puebla, only 12 km from Cholula, stopping for lunch at the restaurant Fonda de Santa Clara with a menu that honours the Poblana regional cuisine. We'll also stop to explore and enjoy the Cathedral and the Rosario Chapel, an architectural jewel of the 18th century, as well as the El Parian market as well as passing by an infinite number of beautiful colonial houses.

After checking in to our hotel, we will enjoy dinner at restaurant La Casona de la China Poblana.

Overnight at Hotel Palacio San Leonardo Puebla or similar (1 night)

DAY 6 | Apr. 21, 2020 | Puebla - Oaxaca (B)

Breakfast at the hotel. The morning allows for free time to roam or to take an optional excursion to the local market where we will pick our own ingredients prior to heading to a local restaurant and learning how to put those items together to make a Poblano dish.

In the afternoon, we'll depart for Oaxaca (approx. five-hour drive) where we will then check in to hotel and have the remainder of the day and evening at our own leisure.

Overnight at Hostal de la Noria or similar (4 nights)

DAY 7 | Apr. 22, 2020 | Oaxaca (B)

Breakfast at the hotel. We will then visit a small Zapotec community in the Valley of Oaxaca, where a local family welcomes visitors into their traditional kitchen. Your host will be one of the so-called Comideras who are in charge of preparing the food for any festivity organized in the surrounding villages. These ladies will assist us as we prepare three seasonal dishes.

Return to Oaxaca a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for a city tour through the Historic Centre where we will see the beautiful architecture of The Cathedral, the Temple, former convent of Santo Domingo de Guzman, the Basilica de la Soledad and the Teatro Macedonio Alcalá. We'll also visit the Museum of Cultures in the former convent of Santo Domingo, where we will see the unique ornaments found by archaeologist Alfonso Caso in a tomb in Monte Albán.

Enjoy the remainder of the evening at your leisure.



DAY 8 | Apr. 23, 2020 | Oaxaca (B, L, D)

Today we visit the site of Monte Alban where the Zapotec civilization based its cultural and commercial development on controlling the surrounding valleys. The site stands on an artificial plateau, atop a hill overlooking the valley floor.

After exploring Monte Alban and learning of its history, we'll make our way to Cuilapam de Guerrero to visit the beautiful ex-convent. Afterwards we'll enjoy lunch at the Zapotec village of Zaashila at La Capilla, which offers a typical Oaxacan menu, served on large tables in a friendly communal dining area.

In the afternoon, we'll continue to San Martín Tilcajete, where artisans create Alebrijes; brightly coloured Oaxacan-Mexican folk art sculptures of fantastical creatures, and we'll also have the chance to create your own masterpiece! In the evening we'll enjoy dinner at a popular local restaurant in Oaxaca, Itatoní.

DAY 9 | Apr. 24, 2020 | Oaxaca (B, L, D)

Breakfast at the hotel. In the morning, we drive to Santa Maria del Tule, where you can admire the famous ancient Tule Tree before continuing on to Hierve el Agua, where we'll see bubbling mineral springs forming petrified waterfalls and natural bathing pools with a spectacular view of the surrounding valleys.

We'll also stop at a local Mezcal factory, a so-called Palenque, and learn about the fermentation process of this traditional liquor, representative of Oaxaca.

Afterwards we'll visit the Mitla archaeological site, the most important religious centre for the Zapotec during the Post-Classic period.

Later we visit a weaver workshop in Teotitlán del Valle, where wool rugs are manufactured and we can watch a traditional wool-making demonstration.

Lunch will be at a local restaurant prior to returning to Oaxaca.

In the evening, enjoy dinner at the highly regarded restaurant, Casa Oaxaca.

DAY 10 | Apr. 25, 2020 | Oaxaca - Toronto/Vancouver (B)

Breakfast at your hotel. Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

RESPONSIBILITY

Merit Travel Group Inc. doing business as Merit Travel, acts solely as agents for the Travel Service Suppliers such as hoteliers, airlines, ground service operators, bus operators, etc. who are providing their facilities as described in this brochure. We do our best to select such suppliers but exercise no control over them and cannot be held responsible for the failure of these suppliers to carry out any obligations. Any and all bookings made with these suppliers by us, for you, are subject to the terms and conditions of each and every such supplier. Supplier liability may also be limited by law, tariffs, or conditions set forth in their documentation, tickets, etc.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Merit and its directors, officers, employees, affiliates, successors, assigns, agents and other representatives are not responsible for any and all claims for losses, damages (whether direct, indirect, special, punitive, or other consequential damages, lost profits or opportunities) delays, illness, injuries, inconvenience, loss of enjoyment, or anxiety (whether based in contract, tort, negligence, strict liability or otherwise, and even if Merit and the Travel Service Suppliers have been advised of the possibility of damages to such party or any other party) arising from:

- a. Fault or negligence or omissions on the part of the said travel service suppliers;
- b. Illness, theft, strikes, mechanical problems, quarantine, governmental intervention, weather conditions, acts of hostility or violence, and any other grounds beyond our control;
- c. Your failure to obtain passport, visas, other travel documents or inoculations
- d. Your failure to advise us the name of the traveller exactly as it appears on the passport;
- e. Your failure to report on time at an airport or ground transfer facility;
- f. Material damages, theft or other mysterious disappearances of your goods;
- g. Personal injuries or death;
- h. Force Majeure - an event(s) beyond our, or our supplier(s), reasonable control including, but not limited to, acts of God, strikes, lockout or other labour disputes or disruptions, wars, blockades, insurrections, riots, earthquakes, weather conditions, floods or acts of restraints imposed by governmental authorities.

PRICING

All prices are per person in Canadian dollars unless otherwise noted. GST, HST and provincial taxes are applicable on tours as noted.

INCREASE IN TOUR COSTS

Merit reserves the right to increase tour prices in the event of an increase in government and airport authority imposed taxes and fees, fuel and currency surcharges, supplier price increases, or any other cost increase. If the increase is greater than 7% of the tour cost, the client may cancel the booking within seven days of notification and obtain a full refund.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

A deposit of \$750 per person is required at the time of booking. Full and final payment is due 90 days prior to departure.

Please note, some of our suppliers may require additional deposit or full payments at time of booking, pending seasonality. You will be advised of additional requirements at time of booking.

LIABILITY

Merit cannot assume responsibility for any costs incurred for any travel arrangements purchased separately from the Merit tour. Merit's responsibility shall extend only to the provisions of advice as to industry-standard or supplier recommended connections and check-in times. Provided Merit supplies such advice, they shall not be responsible for missed connections or departures, regardless of the cause.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN (INSURANCE)

Trip cancellation and interruption insurance, medical and hospital insurance, baggage insurance, and various additional insurances are available and

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. If you choose not to purchase insurance, you are required to sign an Insurance Waiver Form. Note that if you choose not to purchase insurance, you are fully liable for any and all penalties imposed as stated under Cancellation Policy on this page. Please speak to your representative at the time of making reservations about insurance.

REFUNDS

The nature of travel involves risks and unpredictable weather and thus Merit cannot assure any departure or arrival times at any point of an itinerary. Your right to receive a refund is limited. There will be no discounts or monies refunded for any missed or unused services. Merit reserves the right to cancel the tour for any reason. Should this occur, a full refund will be made to the traveller.

CANCELLATION POLICY

While Merit will do its utmost to minimize any penalties charged, there are irrecoverable costs associated with your tour. The following penalties will be considered the costs incurred with cancellation:

- a. 90 days or more prior to departure: Loss of total deposit.
- b. 89 – 60 days prior to departure: Loss of 50% of total tour cost.
- c. 59 days or less prior to departure: Loss of 100% of total tour cost.

Cancellation penalties for some tours will vary and there may be additional penalties associated with the airfare. If so, these policies will be noted separately at time of booking and will prevail.

TOUR CHANGES

We reserve the right to substitute itineraries, hotels, airlines or vessels due to conditions beyond our control. In such cases we will do everything possible to ensure the locations visited, the excursions taken and the hotels offered are similar to the ones originally planned. Any change to itineraries will not result in eligibility for a refund.

REVISION FEE

Changes to your tour reservation might not be possible. Should you request a change and we are able to accommodate it, you will be subject to any charges imposed by the airline or tour suppliers. In addition, we reserve the right to charge a \$50 revision fee for any change made after the deposit is paid. A change in name or departure date may constitute a cancellation, and the corresponding penalties may apply.

PERSONAL DOCUMENTATION

All passengers travelling internationally must travel with a passport. Many countries require the passport to be valid for 6 months beyond the traveller's return date. Visas may be required for some destinations. It is the passenger's responsibility to obtain at the passenger's expense, all documentation required by all relevant authorities. In the event that the passenger does not possess the correct documentation, the air carrier has the right to refuse passage.

DESCRIPTION

Every effort has been made to describe and produce the travel services and photographs as accurately as possible in the printed tour description. However we reserve the right to correct errors and we will make all reasonable efforts to inform you should any significant changes occur.

Please note that the living standards and local conditions during your tour may be different from what you are accustomed to at home.

CONSENT

Your retention of tickets, reservations or bookings after issuance shall constitute your consent to the above terms.

If you encounter any concerns during your tour, please inform your local travel service provider. If the matter cannot be resolved, please inform Merit Travel in writing upon your return.