

# Grand American Adventures

USA, CANADA,  
ALASKA AND  
LATIN AMERICA

[www.trekamerica.com](http://www.trekamerica.com)

## Ruta Maya



### Tour Overview

**Chitzen Itza.** Stunning designs and excellent preservation make this a favourite stop for guides and visitors alike. We then visit colonial Merida. Lined with lovely cafes, the central markets are a great place to people watch and shop for the high quality Mexican hammocks. Don't worry, your guide will be sure to help negotiate "un buen precio"! After a walking tour of the beautiful city, we continue south on to Palenque. Famous for spectacular ruins set deep in the jungle, Palenque has a magical quality about it.

From Chiapas, onto Oaxaca, one of the most beautiful cities in Mexico. Native culture, food and Zapotec ruins abound in this historic city. Besides exploring the brightly coloured markets and visiting local artisans, we will tour Monte Alban ruins, which sits on top of a ridge and affords glorious views over the valley. From the city to the sea...The blue waters of the Pacific Ocean with its world class waves are perfect for two days of beach, surf and horse-riding, not to mention the great bars and nightlife. Puerto Escondido is one of the cooler places on the coast to hang out with an excellent atmosphere. You'll feel like a local in no time!

Off the beaten path and onto Tuxtla Guitierrez, the capital city of Chiapas. Here we have the included boat tour of the spectacular Sumidero Canyon with its 1000 meter walls and cascading waterfalls. Keep your camera ready for crocodiles, river turtles and tropical birds.

Next, San Cristobal de Las Casas. With colourful Indian markets and a fine array of restaurants and cafes, you will enjoy exciting nightlife with the finest local flavour!

Along the Guatemalan border to the banks of the mighty Usamacinta river, take an Indiana Jones style boat ride to the fabled Yaxchilan ruins. Accessible only by boat, the Yaxchilan and the Lacandon Indians' culture have been preserved brilliantly. Take a flashlight as there is some true exploring to be done here under the jungle canopy. Crossing the river into Guatemala, Tikal awaits. This place has to be seen to be believed- with its high pyramids reaching for the sky and lush wild jungle- you will be amazed. Watch for monkeys in the trees and have your camera ready to capture the perfect picture!

After Tikal, we return to Mexico for some Caribbean fun. The beautiful "Lagoon of Seven Colours" is Bacalar's claim to fame and an included boat tour of its spectacular scenery will show you why! We finish the trip with three nights camping beachfront on the Mexican Caribbean. Catch the sun, swim, dive, snorkel the underground cenotes (caves), or sip a cerveza on the beach. Oh yes this is "living la vida loca"!

### Is This Tour For Me?

Explore ancient Mayan ruins, snorkel along pristine Caribbean beaches and hike to lush jungle waterfalls on this 11 day fully accommodated adventure throughout Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and Chiapas.

### Tour Itinerary

- 1 Cancun >> Merida (HP)
- 2-3 Palenque
- 4-6 Oaxaca (HP)
- 7-9 Puerto Escondido
- 10 Tuxtla Guitierrez
- 11-12 San Cristobal
- 13-14 Frontera Corozal
- 15 Tikal
- 16 Chiapas
- 17 Chetumal/Bacalar
- 18-20 Caribbean Beaches
- 21 Cancun

HP = Hotel nights included in the price

### Tour Essentials

Duration:	21 days
When to go:	Year Round
Accommodation:	16 nights camping & 4 hotel nights
Meals:	Included when camping, other meals paid locally
Start/Finish:	Tour starts at 07.30 & finishes approx 17.00 in the lobby of our Cancun area hotel

### Included Highlights

- ✓ Guided jungle tour of Palenque
- ✓ Jungle boat trip to Yaxchilan & Guatemala
- ✓ Boat trip on Bacalar 'Lagoon of 7 Colours'
- ✓ Tour of Indian village markets
- ✓ Visit traditional artisans of Teotitlan del Valle
- ✓ Admission to Misol-Ha and Agua Azul waterfalls
- ✓ Admission to Chichen Itza, Palenque, Monte Alban, Yaxchilan and Tikal
- ✓ All meals whilst camping
- ✓ Professional bilingual tour leader, camping fees/equipment & transportation



# Ruta Maya Tour Information

## DAILY ITINERARY

### Days: 1 Cancun & Merida

We head out from Cancun to the amazing Chitzen Itza ruins. Their stunning designs and excellent preservation make them a favourite stop for guides and visitors alike. From the past to the present, we visit colonial Merida. Lined with lovely cafes, the central markets are a great place to people watch and shop for the high quality Mexican hammocks. Don't worry, your guide will be sure to help negotiate "un buen precio"!

Accommodation: Hotel included. Meals paid locally.

### Days: 2-3 Palenque

After a walking tour of Merida, we continue south on to Palenque. Famous for spectacular ruins set deep in the jungle, Palenque has a magical quality about it. After exploring the archaeological site, we set camp in a secluded jungle site. As the sun sets, listen closely and you may hear howler monkeys in the trees, before watching the night skies open to millions of bright stars.

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 4-6 Oaxaca

From Chiapas, onto Oaxaca, one of the most beautiful cities in Mexico. Native culture, food and Zapotec ruins abound in this historic city. Besides exploring the brightly coloured markets and visiting local artisans, we will tour Monte Alban ruins, which sits on top of a ridge and affords glorious views over the valley.

Accommodation: Hotel included. Meals paid locally.

### Days: 7-9 Puerto Escondido, Pacific Coast

From the city to the sea. The blue waters of the Pacific Ocean with its world class waves are perfect for two days of beach, surf and horse-riding, not to mention the great bars and nightlife. Puerto Escondido is one of the cooler places on the coast to hang out with an excellent atmosphere. You'll feel local in no time!

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 10 Tuxtla Guitierrez

Off the beaten path and onto Tuxtla Guitierrez, the capital city of Chiapas. It is here that we have the included boat tour of the spectacular Sumidero Canyon with its 1000 meter walls and cascading waterfalls. Keep your camera ready for crocodiles, river turtles and tropical birds.

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 11-12 San Cristobal

Next, San Cristobal de Las Casas. One of the most beautiful and well preserved colonial cities, San Cris is nestled in the mountains of Chiapas and has a comfortable climate year round- you may even need a jumper at night! With colourful Indian markets and a fine array of restaurants and cafes, you will enjoy exciting nightlife with the finest local flavour!

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 13-14 Frontera Corozal

Along the Guatemalan border to the banks of the mighty Usamacinta river, take an Indiana Jones style boat ride to the fabled Yaxchilan ruins. Accessible only by boat, the Yaxchilan and the Lacandon Indians' culture have been preserved brilliantly. Take a flashlight as there is some true exploring to be done here under the dense jungle canopy.

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 15 Tikal

Crossing the river into Guatemala, Tikal awaits. This place has to be seen to be believed - with its high pyramids reaching for the sky and lush wild jungle - you will be amazed. Watch for monkeys in the trees and have your camera ready as this you will want to capture.

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 16-17 Chiapas, Chetumal & Bacalar

After Tikal, return to Mexico for some Caribbean fun. The beautiful "Lagoon of Seven Colours" is Bacalar's claim to fame and an included boat tour of its spectacular scenery and fish life will show you why! Take a refreshing swim in the Cenote Azul, a perfect natural spring, before driving up to our exclusive Caribbean beach.

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 18-20 Caribbean Beaches

Three nights camping beachfront on the Mexican Caribbean means an unforgettable time. Catch the sun, swim, dive, snorkel the underground cenotes (caves), or sip a cerveza on the beach. Oh yes this is "living la vida loca"!

Accommodation: Camping with meals included

### Days: 21 Cancun

After staying as late as we can at the beach we continue back to Cancun to finish this trip of a lifetime. Adios amigos!

## ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE HOTELS

Our arrival and departure hotels are conveniently located and serve as your tour's start and end points. Rooms are comfortable and spacious, with two double beds and en-suite facilities. They make good bases for sightseeing and offer an opportunity to informally meet with your fellow trekkers.

The tour begins at 07:30hrs in the hotel lobby, where you will meet your group and tour guide. You should have packed your bags and eaten breakfast so that you are fresh and ready to start the journey.

The tour ends between 17:00-18:00hrs on the final day. Please do not reserve flights until at least 21:00hrs or the following day.

If you would like to reserve additional nights in our hotel before or after the holiday, or if you would prefer to have your own room throughout, please contact our sales team for additional information and associated costs.

## CAMPING ACCOMMODATION

Camping allows us to stay in the heart of the most breathtaking natural scenery, away from fast food outlets and the encroaching development; and Grand American Adventures' experienced tour leaders and top quality equipment will surely enhance your experience.

Your comfort is important to us and we know that starts with using high quality camping gear. We only use top of the range, spacious two-person tents and thick (air/foam-filled) sleeping pads to ensure your evenings are comfortable and restful. Your guides help prepare delicious meals (using state of the art camping stoves). All you need to bring is a sleeping bag and a sense of adventure and you will be sure to enjoy the trip of a lifetime!

Nearly all of our local campgrounds provide modern conveniences and amenities such as hot/warm showers (paid locally approx \$2) and flush toilets; whilst others may have swimming pools, shops and launderettes nearby. On special occasions, our groups may utilize rustic, wilderness sites in order to fully appreciate more remote areas' natural surroundings. That said, waking up at camp to the smell of fresh brewed coffee provides a truly intimate natural experience and one that eludes conventional tourists.

**A sleeping bag is required for this tour.** We recommend you take at least a 3-season sleeping bag (0°C).



# Ruta Maya Tour Information

## FOOD & DRINK

Grand American Adventures include all meals while camping (alcohol/drinks purchased locally) and you will be sure to enjoy regular international dinner parties on the road. Our professional guides are great in the kitchen and they will assist the group in preparing delicious, healthy meals for you to enjoy, so you can take that path less travelled... with a full stomach.

We prepare plenty of good fresh food on our camping trips and anticipate hearty eaters. Breakfasts often include fresh fruits and cereal, toast, juice, coffee or tea. Fried bacon or eggs may also be available on more leisurely mornings. Lunches are typically picnic style and consist of a selection of delicatessen meats, cheeses and salads. Dinners are filling and main dishes include pastas, grilled meats/chicken/fish, as well as regional specialties such as fajitas or BBQ's and are accompanied with cooked vegetables or fresh salads.

Meals consist of a variety of balanced dishes and, aiming for universal appeal, we avoid highly spiced foods. Vegetarians are certainly welcome and are always accommodated. Please let us know of any dietary concerns at the time of booking.

On occasion, meals are taken in local restaurants where passengers pay individually for food and drinks en route. Average breakfasts cost from \$4-\$8, lunches from \$5-10 and dinners from \$8-\$15; this does not include alcoholic beverages. Wine costs approximately \$3 per glass and beer \$2 per bottle. Please be aware that a tip of approximately 15-20% is added to group meals in restaurants in Central/South America and applicable taxes will also be added to all listed menu prices.

## GROUP PARTICIPATION

An essential part of a Grand American Adventures camping holiday is helping out around the campsite. Our tents are easy to set up and with guidance from your tour leader, everyone will assist with the setting up and packing of the campsite. As a team, it only takes approximately 20 minutes before setting up your "home with a view" in the great outdoors!

Your tour leaders will organize daily activities and guided hikes, as well as coordinate and assist the group when shopping for food, preparing the daily meals and washing up.

As this is a participatory trip, group members will assist with the preparation of meals and with the washing. That said, often the best meals on the road are created when individuals offer to cook up one of their specialties from home!

## GROUPS

Average group size is 12 passengers.

Passengers come from a range of countries worldwide (average of 4 nationalities per group) and many will be solo travellers. You will find you have many things in common with your fellow trekkers, including a passion for adventure and a strong interest in exploring the national parks of Central/South America.

Grand American Adventures are designed for adults over 18 years old. Most passengers are aged 25-55, every year we get many people above and below this age range. All travellers over the age of 55 will be requested to complete a self-declaration of fitness.

## TRANSPORTATION

Grand American Adventures uses private transportation for the majority of this tour. The vehicles that we use have comfortable seating, have air-conditioning/heating, tinted windows and a stereo (often iPod compatible). Our vehicles also have a custom store space for all luggage and equipment, as well as excellent suspension so we can travel off the beaten track, where the crowds in public coaches cannot go!

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES/SPENDING MONEY

There are many opportunities for optional activities during the holiday. Your tour guide will organize these on your behalf and you will pay locally in cash. Featured activities and approximate prices are listed below:

★ Snorkelling & scuba diving	\$60-\$200
★ Xel-Ha Marine Park	\$75
★ Surf lessons	\$35
★ Local shops & markets	\$ FREE
★ Merida walking tour	\$ FREE

### Local Currency

The local currency is the Mexican Peso. As in most countries in Latin America, the currencies are closely tied to the US dollar, so you should take US dollars (not sterling), which can be changed with ease in any major town or tourist centre. There are approximately:

12.68 Mexican Pesos to 1 US Dollar

ATM/Cash points are widely available in all major cities. Please ensure that your credit or debit cards have international access and a PIN number to access your funds. (You should also bring USD travellers cheques as a back-up.)

We recommend you take at least US \$35 dollars per day to cover local expenses, but it's better to bring more than you need rather than run short on tour. Your spending money needs to cover optional activities, film, souvenirs and snacks along the way. Please note - Dollar bills should be in good condition, without blemishes/rips, or they may not be accepted.

Additionally, tipping is a way of life in Mexico and, whilst not compulsory, it is expected. We recommend a tip of approximately US \$2-3 per day to be given in cash to your tour leader at the end of your holiday.

## PASSPORT AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

This tour visits Mexico and it is your responsibility to obtain the proper passport and visa(s). More details are provided in our Trek Tips pre-departure information at <http://www.trekamerica.com/trektips.html>

You are required to show your passport at immigration. At other times documents, plane tickets, and other valuables may be stored in the hotel safe or in your luggage. Carry a photocopy of the photograph and personal information page of your passport.

Be cautious with belongings; pickpockets are common in congested urban areas, especially in markets. Use a money belt or neck pouch. Bring along a photocopy of important documents, cheques and other valuables in case you lose anything and need to make an insurance claim. You may consider emailing yourself any relevant information as a backup to what you are carrying on your person.

## INSURANCE

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must be insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs, air ambulance, and helicopter rescue service). Our insurance policy is designed specifically to cover the potential risks on our holidays- particularly the many optional activities offered.

If you do not take our policy, you must ensure that the policy you do take offers an equivalent level of protection. Any claims concerning matters for which you are insured must be directed to your insurers.



# Ruta Maya Tour Information

## LOCAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Should you encounter any problems while in Mexico before the tour, please feel free to contact our local representative. Any queries generated at home should be directed to either our USA or UK sales offices. Those numbers are below in the footer of this page.

Tel 0052 777 315 9704  
 Fax 0052 777 100 0217  
 Cell 00521 777 264 4943

Our office staff speak English and Spanish and are here to assist you with your inquiries. If you miss a flight, are going to be late for the morning departure or are having other difficulties, give our office a call.

## COMMUNICATIONS

While much of this trek will lead you to far-off places beyond the main tourist routes, communications to the outside world will be possible via telephone or internet. But it should be realized that this may not be possible on all days on tour and some flexibility needs to be understood.

In case of emergency, speak with your tour leader at once to allow him or her time to deal with the situation.

## INOCULATIONS/HEALTH

Currently, no vaccinations are required in order to enter Mexico. However, the following are recommended:

- Hepatitis A • Typhoid • Tetanus • Polio • Malaria

For detailed information and advice concerning vaccinations go to: [www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk) <<http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk/>>

Vaccination requirements change periodically so we advise that you check with your nearest specialist travel clinic 4-6 weeks before departure to get up-to-date information.

We also recommend:

- That you know your blood type (or group)
- That you communicate any pre-existing health conditions to both your travel agent and Grand American Adventures tour leader.

## USEFUL PHRASES IN SPANISH

### Phrases

- Hello - Hola
- Goodbye - Adiós
- How are things? - Qué tal?
- Please - Por favor
- Thank you - Gracias
- Yes - Sí
- No - No
- Excuse me/sorry - Con permiso
- How much is it? - Cuánto cuesta?
- Too expensive - Es demasiado caro

### Spanish Numbers

- 1 - uno
- 2 - dos
- 3 - tres
- 4 - cuatro
- 5 - cinco
- 6 - seis
- 7 - siete
- 8 - ocho
- 9 - nueve
- 10 - diez
- 20 - veinte
- 30 - treinta
- 100 - cien
- 1000 - mil

## HOW TO BOOK YOUR TOUR

Contact Grand American Adventures by telephone, email or via our website to check availability on the tour you want to join. We can normally hold you a seat on 'option' for up to 3 days to allow you time to finalise your flight arrangements and send us your booking form with a deposit payment.

If you are ready to book and pay your deposit, we have a secure, online booking facility where you can pay in most major currencies with a credit or debit card. Check availability early to avoid disappointment.

Check Availability at:  
<http://www.trekamerica.com/trektips.html>

## ALTERNATIVE TOURS

If you would prefer to join a different Grand American Adventures tour, we have several other camping tours and a variety of lodging, walking and specialty tours as well as family adventures for you to choose from. Click on the link below for more information.

<http://www.trekamerica.com/grandamericanadventures.html>

## ADVENTURE TRAVEL

All details are provided in good faith. Due to the nature of travel, this information can change and should therefore be taken as an indication only and not as a contractual obligation on the part of Grand American Adventures. If you have any questions, please contact us.

## CLOTHING/BAGGAGE

- Comfortable walking shoes and sport sandals.
- For your comfort we recommend you travel as light as possible; many airlines impose a maximum weight limit of 20kg. We suggest one main piece (a soft bag or rucksack, not a hard suitcase) and a daypack (25-30 litres that is large enough to carry what you need for the day including camera, water, etc.)

We also recommend the following:

- Several changes of underwear and T-shirts
- 2-3 hiking shorts, 1 long hiking pants
- Swim suit
- Wide-brim sun hat or baseball cap
- Windproof/rain jacket
- Long sleeve light shirt
- Sunscreen, sun-blocking lip cream & sunglasses
- Money belt or neck pouch
- Spare plastic bags for organizing laundry, film, etc.
- Insect repellent
- Water bottle
- Flashlight
- Personal First Aid Kit - our trek staff carry a medical kit. In addition, we request that you carry certain basic supplies with you. An analgesic (aspirin or Tylenol), Peptobismol (liquid or tablets), mild laxative, Nasal decongestant, Chlortrimeton (for allergies), Throat lozenges, Moleskin, Triple antibiotic cream (eg. Neosporin), Band aids (plasters) and an elastic (Ace) bandage.

## Average High / Low Temperatures in Celcius (°C)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Cancun</b>	27/19	27/19	28/21	28/22	30/24	31/25	32/22	32/24	31/24	30/23	28/21	27/20

Celsius / Fahrenheit Conversions: -10°C = 14°F 0°C = 32°F 10°C = 50°F 20°C = 68°F 30°C = 86°F 40°C = 104°F

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Check Tour Availability Online @ <http://www.trekamerica.com/grandamericanadventures.html>

