

Grand American Adventures

USA, CANADA,
ALASKA AND
LATIN AMERICA

www.trekamerica.com

Yucatan Highlights



Tour Overview

This journey of adventure and discovery begins with a visit to Chichen Itza, one of the most excavated and best preserved of all archaeological sites in Mexico. Explore El Castillo pyramid and gaze beyond for a fantastic glimpse into the Mayan past.

Move on to the beautiful city of Merida, the capital of the Yucatan. From our hotel, spend the day in the many shops, museums and zocalo of this charming city and mingle with descendants of the Maya whose culture is now laced with Spanish influence.

Travel next to the ruins of Uxmal where intricately carved temple facades pay homage to Chac, the Mayan rain god. Now it's on to the city of Campeche, the only coastal walled city in the New World where, from our hotel deep in the heart of the city, we can explore the remnants of its colourful past.

Continue down the ancient Mayan trade route to Palenque, and explore ruins lost in the jungle for hundreds of years. Marvel at the magnificent pyramid known as the Temple of the Inscriptions and take a guided jungle tour to learn about this unique ecosystem. After such an adventurous day, relax in the inviting jungle pools of the Misol Ha waterfall.

Cross the Yucatan peninsula for a night on the shores of the beautiful lagoon of seven colours at Bacalar. Take a refreshing swim in the Cenote Azul before heading up the coast to the ruins of Tulum, the only major Mayan city built beside the sea. Discover Hidden Worlds Cenotes Park where you can snorkel beneath the jungle and explore underground caverns.

Enjoy personal time relaxing on miles of palm fringed sugar white beaches or take a scuba lesson to get a closer look at this underwater paradise. Spend your final days and nights enjoying a host of available activities including the Caribbean nightlife in Playa del Carmen, before ending this magical trip in Cancun.

Tour Itinerary

- 1-2 Cancun (HP) >> Mérida (HP)
- 3 Campeche (HP)
- 4 Palenque (HP)
- 5 Palenque (HP)
- 6 Bacalar (HP)
- 7 Playa del Carmen (HP)
- 8 Playa del Carmen (HP)
- 9 Playa del Carmen (HP)
- 10 Playa del Carmen >> Cancun

HP = Hotel nights included in the price

Tour Essentials

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Duration: | 10 days |
| When to go: | Year Round |
| Accommodation: | 9 hotel nights |
| Meals: | Meals paid locally |
| Start/Finish: | Tour starts at 07.30 and finishes approx 17.00 in the lobby of our Cancun area hotel |

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 accomodated adventure throughout Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and Chiapas.

Included Highlights

- ✓ Guided jungle walking tour
- ✓ Boat trip on Bacalar 'Lagoon of 7 Colours'
- ✓ Misol Ha waterfalls
- ✓ Walking tour of Merida and Playa del Carmen
- ✓ Admission to archaeological sites – Chichen Itza, Uxmal, Tulum and Palenque
- ✓ Professional bilingual tour leader, equipment and private transportation



Yucatan Highlights Tour Information

DAILY ITINERARY

Days: 1 & 2 Cancun, Chichen Itza & Merida

This journey of adventure and discovery begins with a visit to Chichen Itza, one of the most excavated and best preserved of all archeological sites in Mexico. Climb El Castillo pyramid and gaze beyond the largest ball court in Meso-America for a fantastic glimpse into the Mayan past. Move on to the beautiful city of Merida, the capital of the Yucatan. From our centrally located hotel, spend the day in the many shops, museums and zocalos of this charming city, home to the descendants of the Mayan civilization whose culture is now laced with Spanish influence.

Meals: Paid locally | Accommodation: Hotel included

Day: 3 Campeche

Travel next to the ruins of Uxmal where intricately carved temple facades pay homage to Chac, the Mayan rain god. Drive on to the city of Campeche, the only coastal walled city in the New World, where, from our hotel deep in the heart of the city, we can explore the remnants of its colourful past.

Meals: Paid locally | Accommodation: Hotels/Lodges included

Days: 4 & 5 Palenque

Continue down the ancient Mayan trade route to the ruins of Palenque, lost in the jungle for hundreds of years. Marvel at the magnificent pyramid known as the Temple of the Inscriptions and take a guided jungle tour to learn about this unique ecosystem and its plant and animal life. After such an adventurous day, relax and cool off in the inviting waters of Misol Ha waterfall.

Meals: Paid locally | Accommodation: Hotels/Lodges included

Days: 6 Bacalar & Tulum

Cross the Yucatan peninsula for a night on the shores of the beautiful Bacalar Lagoon. Take a refreshing swim in the Cenote Azul before heading up the coast to the ruins of Tulum, the only Mayan city built along the sea. Discover Xel Ha Marine Park where you can snorkel in the protected lagoon and explore underground caverns.

Meals: Paid locally | Accommodation: Hotels/Lodges included

Days: 7-10 Playa del Carmen & Cancun

Enjoy personal time relaxing on miles of unspoilt beaches or take a scuba lesson to get a closer look at this underwater paradise. Spend your final nights enjoying Caribbean nightlife in Playa del Carmen, before ending this magical trip in Cancun.

Meals: Paid locally | Accommodation: Hotels/Lodges included

Tour ends at 17:00 hrs in Cancun on day 10.

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.

LODGING ACCOMMODATION

Designed for those who no longer wish to camp, (or never did!), Grand American Adventures tours utilize comfortable, clean hotels and lodges chosen for their proximity to the highlights of the region as well as easy access to major sights.

Accommodation is on a twin-share basis, with en-suite bathroom facilities. You will be roomed with a fellow passenger of the same sex. In the event that you cannot be matched with another passenger, there is never a forced single supplement charge with Grand American Adventures! However, if you would like your own room, you may request a single at the time of booking for an additional fee.

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



Yucatan Highlights Tour Information

FOOD & DRINK

On Grand American Adventures tours, meals are taken in local restaurants where passengers pay individually for food and drinks en route. Average hotel breakfasts cost from \$5-\$8, lunches from \$5-\$10 and dinners from \$10-\$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 Central/South American restaurants. Applicable taxes will also be added to all listed menu prices

GROUP PARTICIPATION

Grand American Adventures tours are a unique vacation, and much of your enjoyment will come from the team spirit of your group and the fun you'll have together, as well as from the local setting. We cannot stress too strongly the importance of your own positive attitude, given which even the adversity of a rainstorm can be good fun!

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 tours are designed for adults over 18 years old. While most passengers are aged 25-55, every year we get many people both 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!

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.

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 |
| ★ Quad bike rental | \$ 65 |
| ★ Swimming in Cenotes | \$ 5-\$10 |
| ★ Dolphin Experience | \$ 200 |
| ★ 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 your belongings; pickpockets are common in the more 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.



Yucatan Highlights 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.

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.

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/>>

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.

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/grandamericanadventures.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>

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 |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Cancun | 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

