

MEXICO

Photographs and information: [web veloso.com/mexico](http://web.veloso.com/mexico)



Pristine Caribbean coastline, arid desert, rugged mountains, canyons, dense jungle and crisp, freshwater cenotes combine to create one of the world's greatest landscape dramas.



Culture

Remote villages remain in isolated pockets of land, where traditional rural life continues at a pace far removed from the sprawling metropolis that is Mexico City. Colourful markets retain their Indian traditions. Mariachi bands proudly perform their blend of ancient and colonial music. Towns and cities are rich in splendid colonial architecture, painted in glorious burnt oranges and ochres, taking one back in time.

Ancient Civilisations

Ancient cultures flourished in this land centuries ago, leaving their majestic temples and pyramids that surpassed all other civilisations of that time. Settlements were mysteriously abandoned to the encroaching jungle before the Conquistadores, and many remain entangled in

the dense vegetation creating a timeless, magical atmosphere.

Modern Mexico

The popularity of the stunning sandy beaches has engendered superb infrastructure, excellent hotels and services on both the Pacific and Caribbean coastlines.

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Folkloric Dance

MEXICO CITY

web veloso.com/mexicocity

Mexico City is the oldest capital city in the Americas, founded by the Spanish in 1521 on the site of the conquered Aztec capital city. History runs visibly throughout the city, and is visible in the impressive cathedral, the main square, Zocalo, to the ruined Aztec temple next door, the Templo Mayor, ornate colonial churches, houses and government buildings.

This heritage exists alongside the bustle of modern life as Mexico City is also an important business centre and has modernised, creating new trendy areas in Polanco, Roma, San Angel and Condesa with excellent bars, restaurants, shops and hotels. There are parks, wide avenues and countless museums and galleries or classical and modern art. On the outskirts, the massive archaeological site of Teotihuacan bears witness to the ancient Aztec civilisation. Visit the archaeology museum to learn about thousands of years of Mexican civilisation.

Rich unique Mexican folklore



Excursions available to enhance your visit :

- Tours of Mexico City including visiting the Anthropology museum
- Visit Cuernavaca and Taxco outside the city
- The Pyramids of Teotihuacan
- Xochimilco canals with a boat trip and local music
- Colonial towns of Puebla and Cholula outside the city
- Sunday morning cycling including avenues closed to traffic
- Street markets for Arts and crafts
- Mexican Folklore ballet
- Coyoacán with Trotsky, Frieda Kahlo and Diego Rivera museums



Teotihuacan archaeological site with impressive pyramids outside Mexico City



Street market and art exhibition



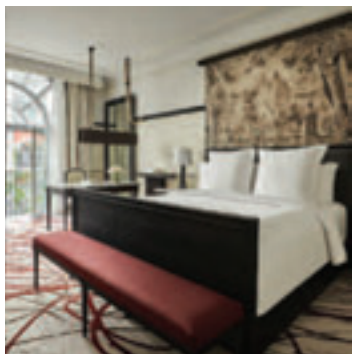
Murals by Diego Rivera

MEXICO CITY HOTELS

Four Seasons Deluxe

Four Seasons is ideally situated on the Paseo de la Reforma, near Chapultepec Park and museums from where you can explore one of the world's largest and most dynamic capitals. There are 240 guest rooms with modern amenities and some overlook the courtyard and fountains. Reforma's 500 restaurants offer an unmatched dining experience. There is also a pool and spa treatments available.

Four Seasons



Condesa DF First

A 1928 building with a modern minimalist decor and a central lightwell. Located in a tree lined street in the trendy Condesa district. The rooftop bar, terrace with sofas and treetops all around and the interior patio restaurant serves breakfast and Japanese/Mexican modern cuisine. The rooms are comfortable with a calm, white and natural mid tones decoration and modern bathroom. Wonderful style.

Zócalo Central Tourist

This hotel is good value and in a good location, on a side street by the main plaza, Zócalo, Cathedral and Presidential Palace. The centre of Mexican life in the city, there are numerous shops, bars, restaurants, and people. The rooms are modern, well decorated, relatively small but with warm colours. There is a restaurant, and a roof terrace with great views.

Downtown Boutique

This hotel combines the grandeur of the 17th Century Palace with a modern interior design, and is located in the historic city centre. There is a glass covered roof top bar and open air swimming pool. The rooms have a warm, minimalist feel with brick, wood and natural colours; all with modern private facilities and at least 26sq metres, Wifi, safe box, minibar and queen size beds.

Las Alcobas Boutique

Luxury in the Polanco area to the extent of offering a Pillow menu, Butler, Bath menu that the Spa staff will run for you in your room and a lighting menu in your room for you to select the most suitable lighting combination to match your mood. Of course all the other hotel services, facilities and service are on a par with this modern stylish luxury standard.



Condesa DF

PRICES FROM 4 days • 3 nights

MEXICO CITY	
Four Seasons	£703
Las Alcobas	£684
Condesa DF	£652
Downtown	£523
Zócalo Central	£295

Prices are per person in a Standard Room for double occupancy including accommodation, breakfast, transfers to/from Mexico Airport. Prices for Triple room, Single Room, and Children available on request.

Additional Hotels to consider:

Casa Vieja, Brick, Camino Real, Emporio Reforma, NH Mexico City, Hyatt, Galerías Plaza, De Cortez, W Mexico City, Villa Condesa, Majestic, St Regis, Sheraton Maria Isabel

COLONIAL CITIES

The Viceroy Tour

7 night itinerary:

Mexico City - 3 *nights* • San Miguel de Allende - 4 *night*
Guanajuato • Dolores Hidalgo • Querétaro - Day trips included
Optional on page 143 to 145 : Stay on at a Pacific Beach Resort
in Zihuatanejo or Puerto Vallarta or explore Baja California.

web veloso.com/viceroy



Bellas Artes in Mexico City

The historic towns north of Mexico City are hidden gems called Pueblos Magicos (Magical Towns) with cobbled streets, colonial houses painted in bright colours and beautiful churches. The colonial heritage is visible in the architecture, with courtyards and warm earth colours, monuments and the character of the people. Visit the house of Ignacio Allende, leader of the Independence movement, which is now a fascinating museum.



Street in San Miguel de Allende



Cathedral in San Miguel de Allende

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE

This colonial city is located 3 hours from Mexico City and is much loved by Mexicans and visitors alike. The walled city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a well preserved central square with gardens, Baroque, Neo-Classical colonial buildings, the Cathedral and the historic home of the Independence hero Ignacio Allende. Many artists live

and lived here. Sit in the main square to enjoy a coffee and watch the world go by. There are many restaurants, cafes and art galleries to enjoy and explore. There is also a large and very good art market offering paintings by local artists, textiles, sculptures, garden furniture and jewellery, among others, only a few minutes from the centre.



Days 1-3 Arriving in Mexico City on Friday allows you to visit the city at the weekend, when it is quieter and there are more cultural activities and markets. Stay until Monday, visiting the huge Aztec pyramids at Teotihuacan and the Saturday market. You may wish to join local people and families for a walk in Chapultepec park or cycling on Avenida Reforma which is closed to traffic on Sundays, take a long lunch in one of the stylish restaurants in San Angel or afternoon tea and cakes watching the world go by in Coyoacán. In Mexico City, there are excellent restaurants with superb fusion cuisine and there are also excellent hotels with spa for you to enjoy. Stay longer to travel out of town and visit Puebla and/or Taxco and Cuernavaca. (B)

Days 4-7 Drive to Querétaro, stopping to explore and onto San Miguel de Allende staying for four nights, which allows three full days to visit major colonial and historic cities of Mexico's Independence Revolutions. Morning tour of San Miguel de Allende's history and art

galleries and then explore on your own: the Allende museum is very interesting, the main square where the cathedral is all lit up at night and the numerous little cafes where hot chocolate is a major delicacy. Take a full day tour out of town to visit the colonial city of Guanajuato and Dolores Hidalgo. Optional excursion to Atotonilco Sanctuary. (B)

Day 8 Transfer to Mexico City (B)

Or, visit more of Mexico, enjoy a few days on the beach at a **Beach Resorts**: Puerto Vallarta and Zihuatanejo are shown on the facing page 143. Tamarindo, Manzanillo and the Yucatan are also possible. Please contact us for a complete itinerary including flights.

PRICES FROM	8 days • 7 nights
THE VICEROY TOUR	£1164

Prices are per person sharing a room for double occupancy, and including accommodation and breakfast, all transport and transfers, English speaking guided excursions, taxes and service charge.

Belmond Casa de Sierra Nevada *Deluxe*

The hotel is set in converted 17th and 18th century buildings with inner courtyards terraces and gardens, one both sides is a street. There is a large pool surrounded by old walls, lush foliage and grass, and sunbathing chairs for you to enjoy. There are 37 spacious rooms and suites with exquisite decor and all the modern facilities you would expect. The restaurant across the road serves contemporary Mexican and Mediterranean cuisine in the perfect setting for this historic town. You can also try the cookery school, the artists corner and a wonderful range of products and services at the Spa. Activities available include horseriding, golf, tennis, walking tours of the town and art galleries and visit vineyards.



PACIFIC BEACH RESORTS



Zihuatanejo's Playa La Ropa - one of Mexico's most beautiful beaches

ZIHUATANEJO web veloso.com/zihuatanejo

Zihuatanejo is a lovely and unique beach resort on a large sheltered bay, with a traditional fishing village on one side and a long beach on the other, with a picturesque cliff between the two. There are small hotel resorts on the beach which has beautiful white sand and is lined with palm trees for shade.

The old fishing village has shops, bars, restaurants and a promenade along the waterfront for a pleasant stroll and to sit outdoors enjoying the fresh air by the sea.

Behind it is the larger modern town with the Ixtapa airport within easy reach. The first settlement was in 1521 as a port and for shipbuilding with agricultural haciendas inland.

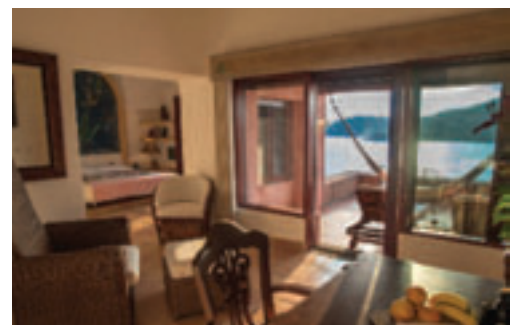
Thompson & Spa Deluxe

Beautiful all-inclusive resort located right on the beach, with lush vegetation and palm trees for shade and tranquility. This luxury resort has a private beach area and also an oceanfront infinity pool. The 56 guestrooms are spacious and modern, decorated with Mexican motifs and natural materials, and each has a private balcony. The low level buildings are intertwined with mature vegetation and gardens with rustling palms.



Casa que Canta Deluxe

Has a unique style and location, stretching from the top of the cliff, down to the sea. Decorated in Mexican architecture with thatched roofs, adobe walls and a sense of space and light over the ocean. The view is breathtaking with a wonderful infinity pool and a gourmet restaurant with terrace. All the bedrooms face the sea and some have a private terrace and pool.



Room with view at La Casa que Canta

Villa Mexicana Tourist

Great location right on the beach, perfect for sunbathing, swimming and wiling away relaxing days. The hotel is decorated in a minimalist style with warm Mexican earth colours. It also has two swimming pools, a bar, restaurant overlooking the sea and full beach lounge service. The building is low level, surrounded by trees and some rooms have a seaview veranda. Additional activities include deep sea fishing, golf and horse riding.

PRICES FROM 4 days • 3 nights

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE

Belmond Casa de Sierra Nevada £779

ZIHUATANEJO

Casa que Canta £1198

Thompson & Spa £763

Villa Mexicana £459

PUERTO VALLARTA

Villa Premiere £480

Sheraton Puerto Vallarta £401

Prices are per person based on two sharing a double room, transport, transfers, guided excursions with English-speaking guide. Breakfast, tax, service charge included.

Additional Hotels: Dreams, Barcelo, Las Velas, Four Seasons Punta Mita

PUERTO VALLARTA web veloso.com/vallarta

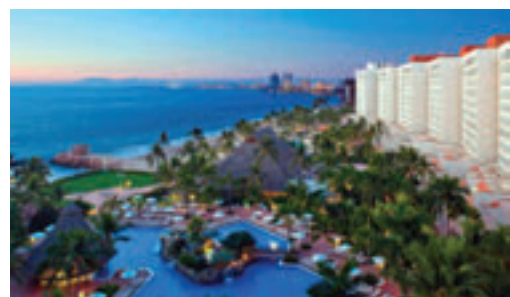
Puerto Vallarta is a resort known for its nightlife, watersports and isolated islands with beautiful beaches to explore on boat trips. The colonial heritage is visible in the architecture of the grand houses, boutique shops, cobbled streets in the centre and the ornate church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Enjoy El Malecón, the seafront promenade, with contemporary sculptures, clubs, bars, restaurants and cafes with terraces.

Villa Premiere First

Located right on the beach and close to the centre of town, Villa Premiere is a modern hotel with 80 comfortable, brightly coloured rooms and Mexican style. The 3 restaurants and 2 bars offer a range of cuisines in a sophisticated setting, with al fresco options. There are 2 swimming pools and a spa offering a range of treatments.

Sheraton Puerto Vallarta First

The Sheraton is a large hotel with an immense shallow pool ideal for swimming. It is located directly on the beach and within a short walk of all the city centre activities. The hotel has all the facilities of a beach resort: all rooms with air-conditioning, satellite TV, mini-bar and security box; it has six restaurants and bars, two tennis courts, a fitness centre and many green areas to relax and enjoy the surroundings.



COPPER CANYON TRAIN JOURNEY



A scenic, unforgettable rail journey across Northern Mexico, starting in the historic city of Chihuahua, travelling through the forest-covered mountains to the breathtaking Copper Canyon, and down to the Pacific Coast. The railway itself is a remarkable feat of engineering which took almost 90 years to complete - it passes through 88 tunnels, over 39 bridges, surrounded by a dramatic range of mountain landscapes.

5 days • 4 nights

Day 1 Arrival at Chihuahua airport and transfer to your hotel. Afternoon guided tour of the city, which has many handsome historic buildings, including the huge colonial cathedral and the government building with impressive murals. Learn about local Pancho Villa's part in the Mexican Revolution.



Chihuahua Cathedral and main square

Day 2 Private transport across the open plains of northern Mexico, known for its apple production, into the mountains to the old frontier town of Creel. There is time in the afternoon to visit the picturesque Lake Arareko, the peculiar rock formations in the Valley of Frogs and the Valley of Mushrooms, and a local indigenous community. The Tarahumara Indians, some of whom still live in caves, are known for their incredible speed and stamina running through the mountains. Some live in towns but many still live in isolated pockets and have retained their traditions and beliefs. (B)

Day 3 Transfer to the train station to board the Chepe Train. Passing through pine forest the mountain scenery begins to open up with glimpses of valleys on either side. Arrive at Divisadero and disembark for the first view over the stunning Urique Canyon, deeper than the Grand Canyon and arguably more impressive. Transfer to your hotel nearby. Afternoon walking tour with a local guide into the Canyon for incredible views and also to meet local Tarahumara people to see how they live. (B)

Day 4 Morning at leisure to explore the surroundings or just enjoy the view. Embark on the Chepe Express Train through the Tarahumara Mountain Range, passing striking scenery. The train winds its way through mountains, past rivers, waterfalls and lakes where the views are arresting and the track has steep, hair-raising drops on either side. The landscape becomes more green as the

train descends to the Pacific Coast, arriving at charming El Fuerte in the afternoon. Transfer to your hotel, and spend time strolling through the historic town or relaxing in the leafy square. (B)

Day 5 In the morning transfer to the airport at Los Mochis to catch your onward flight. (B)

Lake Arareko near Creel



Train, towns and landscapes on the Copper Canyon

PRICES FROM 5 days • 4 nights
COPPER CANYON TRAIN JOURNEY £758

Prices per person including train tickets in First Class and assistance with all shared train transfers, accommodation, tax and breakfast. Overnight at Divisadero includes full board. Copper Canyon journey can also be organised in reverse from Chihuahua to Los Mochis/El Fuerte.



BAJA CALIFORNIA

web veloso.com/baja

Baja California is a long peninsula that extends parallel with the mainland Pacific Coast. It is mostly desert, with high mountains, forests of cacti, small characterful colonial towns and historic Jesuit missions and churches.

Gray Whales migrate yearly from Alaska to the protected bays of the west coast to mate and give birth in safety. Naturally friendly and inquisitive, Gray Whales will approach our small boats and lift their heads out of the water to be touched. On the east coast, the Sea of Cortez is a vivid blue and teems with marine life, sea lions and sea birds. Boat trips allow guests to snorkel with tropical fish, sea lions, or even whale sharks.

At the southern tip, Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo are home to large beach resorts, although the sea is very rough so swimming is usually not allowed. San José del Cabo is a charming town with pedestrian streets, many shops and art galleries.

Safari Endeavour

Safari Endeavour sails in the Gulf of California (also known as the Sea of Cortez) on a 7 night itinerary to discover the abundant marine life and stunning desert landscape of Baja California. Sailing from La Paz, the itinerary visits many islands and bays with plenty of opportunities for snorkelling and daily shore excursions. There are often Whale Sharks and Dolphins in these waters, and you may also see Pelicans, Frigate birds, and Blue-footed boobies, similar to the Galapagos Islands. Safari Endeavour has 42 comfortable cabins, all with private facilities and picture windows to enjoy the view.



The Safari Endeavour exploring Baja California



Mission church in Loreto



Street in San Jose del Cabo

One & Only Palmilla Deluxe

Commanding expansive ocean-facing location, One & Only is an elegant tropical hideaway with 172 luxurious rooms with patio or balcony facing the sea. One & Only is right on a secluded beach and has a tennis court, Golf Club and Wellness Spa, a large swimming pool, gardens and three restaurants serving Mediterranean, Seafood and Oriental cuisine. The hotel is located only 10 minutes from San José del Cabo, a charming and authentic Mexican town, featuring local artisans' handmade arts and crafts as well as restaurants and shops.



Often the whales come right up to the boat

Whalewatching 6 days • 5 nights

Day 1 Arrive in La Paz and transfer to your hotel for an overnight stay. Afternoon free to wander along the seaside.

Days 2-3 Depart by road to Loreto, staying 2 nights. En route take your first boat trip into Magdalena Bay to see the Gray Whales on their yearly migration. The whales are very friendly, and we often see them breaching and coming close to the boats. Explore Loreto's cobbled streets and Jesuit mission. Next day boat trip in Loreto Bay to Isla Coronado to snorkel around the rocks or relax on the beach. (B)

Days 4-5 Travel back by road with another whale watching boat trip in Bahia Magdalena. Continue to La Paz, staying for 2 nights. Full day boat trip to the island of Espíritu Santo to view the wildlife, desert rocky beaches and snorkel with sea lions and tropical fish. (B)

Day 6 Departure transfer to the airport

Los Cabos 5 days • 4 nights

Day 1 Arrive in La Paz, transfer to the hotel. In the afternoon tour of the city walking along the waterfront boulevard.

Days 2-5 Spend the day visiting a series of stunning mangroves and beaches, observe the diverse flora and fauna, and many native birds. Next day, take a boat trip to the idyllic island of Isla Espíritu Santo and snorkel with Sea Lions in clear turquoise water. Next day visit Todos los Santos, a 'Pueblo Magico' (Magical Town), due to its beautiful setting, picturesque squares and the Jesuit missions. Continue to Cabo San Lucas for a ride on a glass bottom boat to the famous stone arch that marks the end of the peninsula. **Day 5** Transfer to La Paz airport.

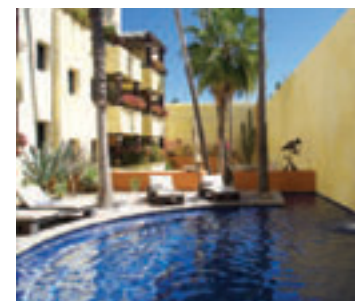
PRICES FROM

WHALEWATCHING - 5 NIGHTS	£1878
LOS CABOS - 4 NIGHTS	£1152
SAFARI ENDEAVOUR - 7 NIGHTS	£4682

Prices per person including accommodation, breakfast, transfers to/from the La Paz or Loreto Airport and excursions as described on the itinerary.

Casa Natalia Boutique

Casa Natalia is a homely, boutique hotel in San José del Cabo, a charming Mexican town, away from the "masses" in Cabo San Lucas. It is close to a private beach club, providing guests with exclusive access. Decorated in typically Mexican earth colours, Casa Natalia has 19 spacious rooms and suites with terrace, hammock and an open concept bathroom. There is a swimming pool, an award-winning restaurant and a patio where breakfast is served. Ideal hotel to combine going to the beach with taking a stroll in town to enjoy.



PRICES FROM 4 days • 3 nights

BAJA CALIFORNIA	
One & Only Palmilla	£2348
Casa Natalia	£426

Prices per person based on two sharing, including transfers to/from Los Cabos airport, accommodation, tax and breakfast.

HIDDEN GEMS

The Aztec Tour

7 night itinerary:

Mexico City - 3 nights

Puebla - 1 night

Oaxaca - 3 nights

Optional : Stay on at a Pacific Beach Resort

web veloso.com/aztec

Travelling south we visit modern, cosmopolitan Mexico City to explore the city, colonial heritage, markets and magnificent Aztec pyramids. Enjoy the towns of Puebla and Oaxaca with traditional main squares called 'Zocalos', where people come to stroll in the gardens and you can experience the true Mexican national character.

Days 1-3 Arriving in Mexico City on Friday allows you to visit the city at the weekend, when it is quieter, there are more cultural activities and markets. Stay until Monday, visiting the huge Aztec pyramids at Teotihuacan and the Saturday market. And possibly, join local people and families for a walk in Chapultepec park or cycling on Avenida Reforma which is closed to traffic on Sundays, take a long lunch, and in the afternoon have tea and cakes watching the world go by in Coyoacán. There are excellent restaurants with superb fusion cuisine and hotels with spa, to enjoy. Stay longer in Mexico City to travel out of town and visit Cuernavaca. (B)

Day 4 Drive to Puebla with great views of the volcano Popocatepetl. On arrival

visit the colonial centre with beautiful examples of Baroque architecture, the Cathedral, El Parian colourful market and charming Los Sapos art centre. Afternoon free at leisure and overnight. (B)

Day 5 Drive to Oaxaca admiring the dramatic landscapes of the Sierra Madre. Stay for 3 nights with two full days to explore. Visit Oaxaca indigenous and colonial heritage and the archaeological site at Monte Albán built by the Zapotecs with pyramids, tomb of kings, ancient ball game court and star observatory. (B)

Day 6 Full day visit to the surrounding area. Visit Tule's giant tree, over 1,000 years old, whose branches embrace and cover a small church. Teotitlan is known for a long tradition of weaving cloth in

Proud shopkeeper in a local market with abundant produce



Cosy interior patios and gardens of colonial architecture

colourful, intricate patterns. The archaeological site at Mitla has superb stone relief patterns on the temple façades and a Mezcal liquor distillery (B).

Day 7 Excursion to the artisan town of Arrazola to see the colourful Alebrijes, papier-mâché figures, and the black clay pottery of Coyotepec. Later visit the little known ancient tombs at Zaachila, and the fortress / monastery at Cuilapan. (B)

Day 8 Transfer to the airport (B)

You can take a flight to any city such as Tuxla to visit San Cristobal de Las Casas, return to Mexico city or fly to a trendy, alternative, beach resort on the Pacific coast such as Huatulco, Puerto Angel or Puerto Escondido.

Mexican church architecture



HUATULCO

Puerto Escondido and Puerto Angel are small towns on the Pacific coast with wonderful beaches and coral reef. Nearby is the extensive archaeological site with a large ceremonial temple and a ball court, and the museum with ceramics and jade at Copalita. The National Park covers both the land and the sea, offering protection to pristine vegetation and a wide variety of wildlife. On the coast there are numerous beach hotels of all styles for you to enjoy.

PRICES FROM	8 days • 7 nights
THE AZTEC TOUR	£1004

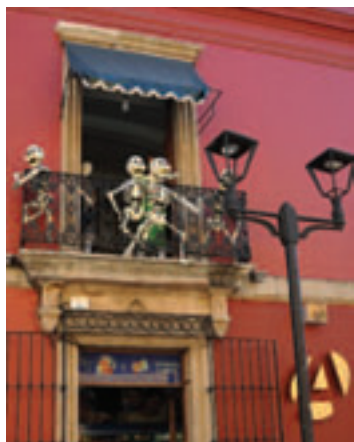
Prices per person including accommodation in first class hotels, all transport and transfers, meals and guided excursions as described on the itinerary. Please enquire to stay on the beach at Huatulco.

OAXACA & SURROUNDINGS

Oaxaca is known for its indigenous cultures historically in conflict with a strong colonial heritage. The town is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Zapotec, Mixtec and Aztec archaeological sites are Monte Alban and Mitla with extensive ruins and ancient pyramids. Oaxaca maintains a strong indigenous identity expressed in local life, monuments, and crafts in papier-mâché, woodcarvings, textiles and black pottery.

Oaxaca's markets offer a fascinating insight into all these crafts. In addition visit the Centro Cultural, the Baroque Cathedral, Zocalo and the bustling abasto market where you can try local specialities and have your personal chocolate mix prepared.

Experience the many outdoor Festivals including the month long Guelaguetza Festival at Easter, and most important of all, Día de los Muertos, 2 November, when all families spend the night in the cemeteries with many candles and flowers, to be close to and remember their dead relatives. The town is in festive mood with celebrations, music and colourful parades.



The Day of the Dead is for family remembrance

Casa Conzatti Tourist

Located on a square, a short walk along pedestrian streets lined with Mexican colours and architecture, to the centre and the Santo Domingo Temple. The hotel has a colonial style with functional rooms elegantly decorated and a balcony. It also has a restaurant with local cuisine.

Excursions outside the town:

- Monte Alban archaeological site of the Zapotec and Mixtec cultures on a mountain and with clusters of buildings, terraces and pyramids.
- Mitla ruins with intricate geometric designs and mosaic patterns.
- Teotitlan Weavers Village famous for colourful textiles.
- Tule Tree is huge; 1,400 years old, in the grounds of a beautiful church.
- Hierve El Agua rock formation that resembles a waterfall
- Visit a Mezcal Distillery to learn about this traditional local spirit.

La Noria Centro First

The hotel is in the city centre and has charming courtyards with plants, Mexican colours, open verandas and a rooftop terrace. The rooms are air-conditioned and have a warm décor, private facilities with air dryer and offers a balcony, cable TV and a coffee machine.

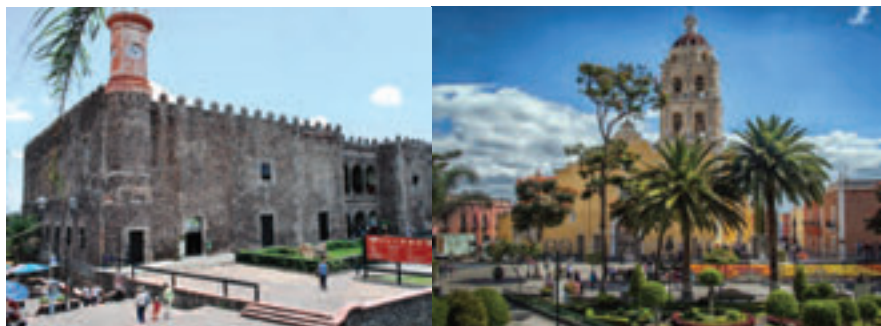


Excursions from Oaxaca: Mitla tree, Monte Alban, weavings, gardens, architecture, colonial history

CUERNAVACA PUEBLA

Cuernavaca is nicknamed the "city of eternal spring" by Alexander von Humboldt, as it boasts an excellent climate all year round. Located only 84km south-west of Mexico City, it is a popular destination for both Mexicans and visitors looking to escape the city. It offers beautiful parks and gardens with bandstands, impressive cathedrals and churches, and charming haciendas such as Las Mananitas and Cocoyoc. It has excellent restaurants and cuisine. Cuernavaca is usually combined with Taxco, famous for its silversmiths.

Puebla is one of the most important colonial cities and is located about two hours south east of Mexico City. Puebla was declared a National Heritage site in 1987. It can be visited with the colonial town of Cholula, with its numerous churches with intricate decorations and the largest man-made pyramid in the new world. Puebla offers exquisite cuisine, a quiet lifestyle and an abundance of colonial architecture especially its remarkable cathedral as well as many small streets, hidden plazas, museums and churches with a distinct colonial architecture.



Views in Oaxaca and San Cristobal below

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS

Hidden in the central highlands of Chiapas, San Cristobal, set in a pleasant valley surrounded by hills, is the cultural capital of the region and has a dynamic art scene. The centre has a Panish colonial layout and Zocalo with mostly Baroque and Moorish architecture, with red tile roofs, cobblestone streets and balconies often covered in flowers. Native Tzotzils maintain their indigenous heritage in the

Mayan traditions of making textiles, ceramics, wrought iron and filigree jewellery. There are excellent craft markets at Santo Domingo and next to Santo Tomas church. The Casa Na Bolom museum gives a window on life in the past.

Zinacantan and Chamula villages have fierce traditions and fiestas and a small church where people sit on the ground.

Casa Mexicana First

The hotel is a beautiful colonial style low building with courtyards and open colonnades. The rooms have wooden floors and balconies overlooking the garden, each room with flat-screen cable TV, a telephone and a private bathroom with a hairdryer. The restaurant serves Mexican and international cuisine.



Mission Grand First

Located close to the main square Zocalo, this hotel is set in a 19-century building courtyards and traditional warm colours and decor. The rooms are individually decorated, some with handmade quilts, tapestries and wrought iron beds, and all with modern facilities. The hotel also has a cafe opening onto a terrace, bar and an a la carte restaurant.

PRICES FROM 4 days • 3 nights

OAXACA & SURROUNDINGS

La Noria Centro	£240
Casa Conzatti	£216

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS

Mission Grand	£324
Casa Mexicana	£270

Prices are per person in a Standard Room for double occupancy including accommodation and Breakfast, tax, service charge and Transfers to/from the airport. *Prices for Triple room, Children, Single Room, Christmas, New Year available on request.



MEXICAN CONTRASTS

The Mirador Tour

14 night itinerary:

Mexico City - 3 nights

Oaxaca - 3 nights

San Cristóbal de las Casas - 3 nights

Palenque - 1 night

Mérida - 3 nights

Chichén Itzá - 1 night

web veloso.com/mirador



The Spirit of Mexico

Explore Mexico, a land steeped in history and scattered with impressive Maya and Aztec pyramids. This tour takes you through the main archaeological sites from north to south, colonial cities and deep into the stunning, mountainous Chiapas region where towns and villages offer the visitor an insight into Mexican rural life. On the coast, there are idyllic beaches while the interior is rich in culture and history as well as magnificent mountains, deserts and canyons.

Days 1-3 Departure Monday or Wednesday for Mexico City arriving in the evening. We take an afternoon excursion to the famous **Anthropological Museum**, housing a magnificent collection of Aztec and Mayan artefacts, great Olmec stone heads, and exquisite ceramics. We tour the pyramids of **Teotihuacan**, supposedly the most advanced urban centre of its time. Optional excursions to the historic towns of Cuernavaca, Taxco or Puebla. (B)



Days 4-6 Morning departure flight to Oaxaca. Set on a high plateau and encircled by mountains, Oaxaca is a colonial gem but has preserved its ancient indigenous character. Tour the city and visit the majestic Zapotec archaeological site at **Monte Albán**. (B)

Day 7 Fly to Tuxtla Gutiérrez and on to the **Sumidero Canyon**. A mighty fissure whose sheer sides are blanketed with lush jungle, home to a variety of wildlife. Boat trip along the river and continue to **San Cristóbal de las Casas** for 3 nights. (B)

Days 8-9 Hidden in the remote mountains, people preserve their culture and traditions in the villages of **San Juan Chamula** and **Zinacantán**. There is a fascinating rustic church with a blend of pagan and catholic symbols. Day free. (B)

Day 10 Journey through the picturesque mountains to **Palenque**. (B)

Days 11-12 In the morning we explore the Mayan site of **Palenque**. Walk among the pyramids and temples, set on the edge of the rainforest, in an atmosphere of serenity and mystery. In the afternoon fly

to **Mérida**. The main plaza of this historic city is bordered by colonial buildings central to Mexican town life, with frequent cultural events. Next day tour the city to discover its historic past. (B)

Day 13 Today we visit the extensive site of **Uxmal**, perfectly restored Mayan sites, showing the intricate stonework and mosaics. The Pyramid of the Magician rises above the surrounding vegetation. (B)

Day 14 Morning journey to **Chichén Itzá**, a blend of the Toltec and Mayan cultures. The monuments here have few decorations and the massive pyramids,

temples and observatory are evidence of the impressive power and knowledge of their rulers. Overnight nearby. (B)

Day 15 Morning free to go back to Chichén Itzá. Afternoon journey to **Cancún** airport for your flight home, (B) or extend your trip with a beach stay.

The Mirador Tour departs Mondays and Wednesday - 16 days INCLUDING 14 nights' accommodation and breakfast (B), all flights (1 overnight), all transfers, excursions and English-speaking guides, all transport and meals as described in the itinerary above. Please see pages 190-193 for further details.

PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL TOUR GUIDELINE PRICES - Departs Monday or Wednesday

	Tourist			First		
	1 Single Traveller	Travelling Together Double	Own Room	1 Single Traveller	Travelling Together Double	Own Room
MIRADOR Tour						
31Dec-17Mar, 12Oct-11Dec	£5043	£3342	£3929	£6796	£4171	£5221
18 Mar-19July, 12Dec-30Dec	£5262	£3561	£4148	£7015	£4390	£5440

GUIDELINE TOUR PRICES are all per person, subject to availability, as all services are booked when you pay your deposit. Please refer to our website veloso.com for current prices and any special offers available. To obtain a Guaranteed Price for your travel dates, please call 020 8762 0616, email travel@veloso.com, or contact our appointed travel agents. Prices for Special Events, New Year's Eve, Christmas, Easter on request.

FLIGHTS on BRITISH AIRWAYS departing from London and UK Airports, Internal Flights and Taxes, are included. UPGRADE to Business Cabin seat add: £2493 in High Season / £2600 in Low Season; Premium Economy Seat : £545

HOTELS used, descriptions and photographs on our website, veloso.com/mirador

TAILOR-MADE SERVICE: Please enquire for a personalised itinerary to fulfil your individual requirements. We can combine hotels, change route, excursions and we can offer triple rooms, suites and De Luxe Hotels.



YUCATÁN PENINSULA

Photographs and information: [web veloso.com/yucatan](http://web.veloso.com/yucatan)



The Yucatan Peninsula has a distinct combination of a rich colonial heritage, a stunning coastline with palm trees, white sandy beaches with a beautiful turquoise sea and dense rainforest with numerous pyramids, remnants of ancient Mayan civilisations.

The limestone soil is dotted with underground rivers and hidden “cenotes” wells with crisp, clear water. Huge archaeological sites, charming colonial cities, and a coastline fringed with superb hotel resorts, all within driving distance, make the Yucatan an ideal holiday destination for everyone including families and those wishing to self-drive.

Ancient Mayan Civilisations

The Mayan civilisation left an astounding legacy of Pyramids, temples, and ornately carved and stone buildings rise out of the dense forest. Different architectural styles and motifs were used, in a fascinating variety of powerful buildings: Coba and Calakmul engulfed by forest and wildlife, Chichén Itza large austere, Uxmal palacious and Tulum serene on the coast.

Stunning Beaches & Turquoise Clear Blue Sea

The popularity of the stunning sandy beaches and warm sea, have engendered excellent hotels and resorts plus a variety of sightseeing excursions, waterparks and activities



Mérida is a charming colonial city, once rich from henequen, a strong fibre from the agave plant used to make rope. Fine mansions can still be seen, a wonderful cathedral and an ornate main square popular with people from all walks of life. Traditional Yucatec costumes can still be seen around the city, the men wearing white shirts and straw hats, ladies wearing the traditional white 'huipil' tunics with colourful flower decorations - particularly during the many cultural events such as traditional dances. Outside the city, country haciendas, small villages, Mayan pyramids, ruins and limestone caves and cenotes, provide a variety of daytrips to explore.



Character squares in Mérida

EXCURSIONS AVAILABLE IN THE YUCATÁN

Izamal

Known as the Yellow City and the City of Hills, that are actually ancient pyramids yet to be excavated. The city has a long history in the Pre-Columbian period and in 2002 was named a "Pueblo Magico" for its special significance. In the 16th century a small Christian temple was built on top of the great pyramid and a large yellow Franciscan Monastery that we can see today was built on top the acropolis of the ancient Maya town.

Countryside Haciendas

The wealth of sisal production led to large country estates, Haciendas, now used as luxury character hotels with beautiful gardens and stunning swimming pools. Stay at Hacienda Xcanatun, just outside Mérida or further out Hacienda San Jose and Hacienda Temozon to explore the countryside. Further south near Uxmal you have Hacienda Uayamon set in dense forest. Each Hacienda has its own character, all are very quiet with old world decoration and furniture, remnants of their old glory, extensive grounds and Mexican and international cuisine.

Chichen Itza

Chichen Itza is an extensive and popular archaeological site, known for its well-restored pyramid and accessibility from the coast. Heat and visitor numbers peak in the middle of the day, so it is best to visit in the early morning or late afternoon, perhaps staying overnight.

Uxmal

Located south of Mérida, Uxmal is an important Mayan site with a number of pyramids, structures and temples. It has palatial feel with unique and impressive stone carvings with intricate design and representations of *Chaac*, the Rain God. Visit also *Kabah*, *Edzna*, *Labna* sites from the *Puuc* period with elaborate structures

Celestun & Rio Lagartos

On the Gulf of Mexico coastline, these are two large nature, UNESCO Biosphere Reserves with lagoons, mangroves and ideal for birdwatching such as flamingos, herons and pelicans and migratory geese. Near Rio Lagartos we find the unique coloured sands at *Las Coloradas*. There is a lodge at Celestun, otherwise best to visit on day trips from Mérida or Chichen-Itza

Excursions available to enhance your visit to the Yucatan :

- Tours of Mérida including the main square, Zocalo, museums and local markets.
- Visit Izamal with the Monastery and most buildings painted yellow
- Explore Celestun nature reserve and Rio Lagartos with flamingoes
- Swim at Ik Kil cenote or less visited Dzipnut, Ek Balam and Dos Ojos.
- Colonial towns of Chetumal and particularly Campeche.
- Franciscan convent route, Kabah, Oxcutzab market and Uxmal.
- Visit Edzna and the Barbara Caves
- Haciendas and cenotes.
- Waterparks Xcaret and Xel-Ha.

Calakmul

Deep in the jungle of the southern Yucatan at the border with Guatemala, Calakmul is remote and only partially excavated. These are some of the largest pyramids in the region, but few visitors make the journey. The surrounding nature reserve is teeming with wildlife.

Palenque

Set in the foothills where the Mayan lowlands meet the mountains of Chiapas, Palenque is a smaller site with excellent details on carvings and artwork. Visitors are allowed to climb some of the pyramids and wander inside the palace. The nearby museum has an excellent collection of artefacts from the site.

Xcaret, Xel-Ha Campeche

The limestone soil of the Yucatan is punctured by a myriad of underground, rivers, surface channels and coastal inlets, with mangroves and crystal clear water filtered by the porous stone. Commercial aquatic theme parks have been built with large car parks for coaches, landscaped and prepared for ecotourism, with beach, restaurants, swimming with dolphins, snorkeling and entertainment. You can float with a buoy along a river with caves

The city has well preserved baroque colonial buildings and architecture with fortifications and walled historic district. Due to numerous pirate attacks, the city was fortified in the 17th century. Two hilltop fortresses are now museums, Fort de San Miguel holds the Campeche Archaeological Museum with artifacts from local Mayan sites like Edzna, Calakmul and Isla Jaina. Wonderful for

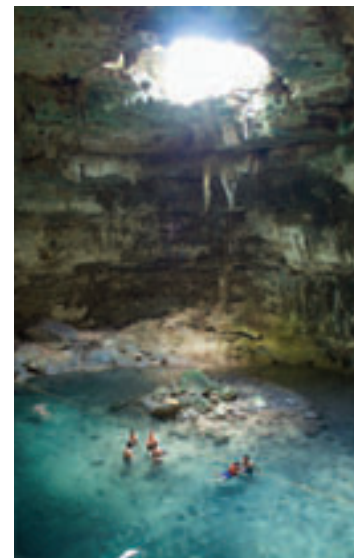


Chichen Itza pyramids

Cenotes

The Yucatan peninsula is covered in limestone sinkholes, called Cenotes. These natural caves and wells are filled with crystal clear water, sometimes with fish and often with lush vegetation and vines hanging down the sides. Dzipnut, Ek Balam, Dos Ojos and others, were sacred places in the Mayan tradition, some had human sacrifices; the cool, clear blue water, the sunlight pouring in from above have a magical effect, making them a must for you to see. Many have been developed for visitors, with stairs down to the water to allow swimming. The most visited is Ik-Kil near Chichen-Itza with tourists coming on full day tours from the coast but many are very quiet, isolated and even, mysterious.

Cenote in the Yucatan



YUCATAN IN-DEPTH

The Palapa Tour

10 night itinerary:

Cancún - 1 night • Tulum - 1 night

Chicanná - 2 nights • Campeche - 2 nights

Uxmal - 1 night • Mérida - 2 nights • Chichén Itzá - 1 night

web veloso.com/palapa



Edzna, Day 6

Explore the isolated sites of the Yucatán, dotted with the remains of past, mighty civilisations, small villages, the walled city of Campeche and colonial Mérida. Step back in time at Calakmul, with some pyramids fully restored and others still hidden by encroaching jungle.

Days 1-2 Flight to Cancún arriving in the evening. Transfer and stay for 1 night. Collect your self drive vehicle (Tourist Class), or meet with your private driver-guide (First Class), and set off for the striking ruins of **Tulum**, set on a cliff top over the stunning turquoise ocean. Stay one night to visit the archaeological site of **Coba** hidden in the dense forest. (B)

Day 3 Continue to **Kohunlich**, visiting the nearby archaeological site famed for its unique 3 metres high stucco masks of the Sun God, from the early classic period (AD 250-500), surrounded by dense rainforest with many of its buildings still lying entangled in the vegetation. Continue to **Chicanná** staying for two nights with one full day to explore the archaeological sites at **Becán** and **Calakmul**. (B)

Day 4 Visit the **Chicanna** archaeological zone filled with beautiful structures with ornate façades. Visit the Maya ceremonial site of **Calakmul**, where a large number of structures have been identified, including the tallest pyramid in Mexico, and is part of an extensive Biosphere Reserve. (B)

Days 5-6 Journey to the Gulf of Mexico to stay for 2 nights at the old walled city of **Campeche** on the coast. Visit **Edzná**, once a large ceremonial centre which flourished around 650AD, and **Campeche** itself. The original colonial architecture and warm colours of the 18th century have been restored in the residential areas and historic centre. Walk the streets and explore the churches, museums and the forts built to protect the city and the Spanish fleets, carrying the riches of Mexico. (B)



Calakmul archaeological site deep, in the forest is also a rich wildlife sanctuary, Day 4

Day 7 Visit the Mayan ruins of **Labná**, noted for their tall corbelled archways and intricate mosaic reliefs, and **Kabah**, with its incredible façade adorned with nearly 300 masks of Chac, the Rain God. Drive to **Uxmal**, showing fine examples of the ornate Puuc style with intricate stone lattice work, mosaics and towering pyramids. Overnight at **Uxmal**. (B)

Days 8-9 Drive to **Oxkutzcab**, a small, picturesque Mayan town with a large and colourful fruit market. Continue to **Mérida**, a colonial city with its buildings painted in soft colours, enclosing delightful, tranquil patios and stay for 2 nights. Spend the day at leisure exploring the city, museums, and markets. (B)

Day 10 Continue to **Chichén Itzá** to visit the mighty Mayan site, one of the largest discovered, full of cosmological significance, with steps, panels and terraces depicting various stages of the Mayan calendar. El Castillo dominates the complex and affords stunning views of the sprawling ruins. Overnight by the site. (B)

Tulum, Day 2



Chicanná Eco Lodge, Day 4

Day 11 Morning free to explore or relax by the pool. Transfer to Cancún (B) to fly home, arriving the following day, Day 12.

The Palapa Tour PRICES ON PAGE 153 Departs **daily throughout the year**, INCLUDING: 12 days and 10 nights accommodation, flights (1 overnight), arrival transfer and Self Drive vehicle (Tourist) or private transport (First). Please see pages 190-193 for further information.

ANCIENT & COLONIAL LANDSCAPES



Izamal Monastery, Day 6

Mayan and colonial heritage, beautiful beaches and the slow, provincial pace of life make the Yucatán Peninsula perfect for a fascinating holiday. Explore the austere and palatial pyramids of ancient Mayan civilisations, discover colonial cities, isolated Haciendas and small villages. On the coast, the turquoise clear ocean, white sandy beaches and rivers with mangroves, make it ideal for swimming, snorkelling and unwinding.

Days 1-3 Depart on your daytime flight to Cancún. On arrival transfer to your hotel staying for 1 night. Transfer to the colonial city of Valladolid for two nights, with a day to explore the Spanish architecture, parks and squares. (B)

Days 4-6 Morning departure to the colonial city of Mérida. Two full days for optional excursions to explore Mérida, visit the Monastery at Izamal or the “human sacrifice cenote” of Dzitnup for a swim; or visit Celestún Nature reserve. (B)

Days 7-8 Transfer to the Mayan archaeological site of Uxmal, where pyramids have intricate decorations. Continue to the colonial city of Campeche for one day to explore. (B)

Day 9 Transfer to Chichén Itzá, to visit the extensive archaeological site with impressive, austere pyramids, the temple and observatory. There is a “son et lumiere” show in the evening Overnight at the hotel nearby. (B)

Days 10-14 Explore Chichén Itzá further in the early morning light, rest by the hotel pool in the midday heat and early in the afternoon, transfer to the coast staying for 5 nights at Playa del Carmen, Illusion (Tourist) (p155) or Mahekal (First) (p155) and The Fairmont (Deluxe) (p158). (B)

On Day15 Transfer to Cancún airport for your flight to London, (B) arriving at Gatwick the following Day 16.

The Cenote Tour departs every Monday, Wednesday, Saturday, 16 days
INCLUDING: hotels for 14 nights and breakfast (B), all flights (1 overnight), transfers, excursions and transport as shown. Please see pages 190 - 193 for further details of what is included.

OTHER BEACH RESORTS

Choose from our selection of beach hotels on pages 158-163. Unwind on a beautiful beach and swim in the turquoise waters of the Caribbean sea.

See map of the Yucatán Peninsula on page 150.

The Cenote Tour

14 night itinerary

Cancún - 1 night

Valladolid - 2 nights

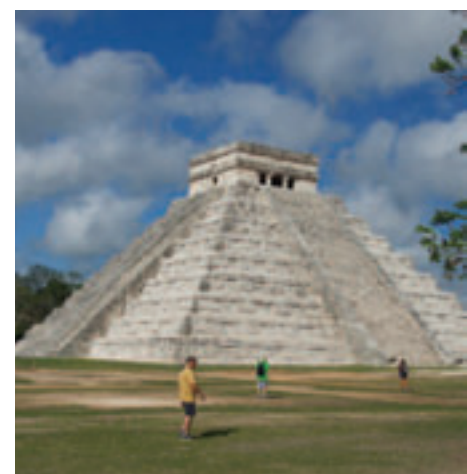
Mérida - 3 nights

Campeche - 2 nights

Chichén Itzá - 1 night

Beach Resort - 5 nights

web veloso.com/cenote



Chichén Itzá Days 1- 4

PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL TOUR GUIDELINE PRICES - Weekly Departures

	Tourist			First		
	1 Single Traveller	Double	Own Room	1 Single Traveller	Double	Own Room
PALAPA Tour						
25Dec-21Jun, 17Aug-12Dec	£2459	£1780	£2245	£3012	£1898	£2548
22Jun-16Aug, 13Dec-24Dec	£2820	£2141	£2606	£3363	£2259	£2945
CENOTE Tour						
31Dec-19Jul, 22Aug-13Dec	£3990	£2511	£3044	£5644	£3344	£4629
20Jul-21Aug, 14Dec-30Dec	£4351	£2872	£3405	£6005	£3696	£4990

GUIDELINE TOUR PRICES are all per person, subject to availability, as all services are booked when you pay your deposit. Please refer to our website veloso.com for current prices and any special offers available. To obtain a Guaranteed Price for your travel dates, please call 020 8762 0616, email travel@veloso.com, or contact our appointed travel agents. Prices for Special Events, New Year's Eve, Christmas, Easter on request.

FLIGHTS on BRITISH AIRWAYS departing from London and UK Airports, Internal Flights and Taxes, are included. UPGRADE to Business Cabin seat add: £1786 in High Season / £2216 in Low Season; Premium Economy Seat : £580

HOTELS used, descriptions and photographs on our website, veloso.com/cenote; veloso.com/palapa

TAILOR-MADE SERVICE: Please enquire for a personalised itinerary to fulfil your individual requirements. We can combine hotels, change route, excursions and we can offer triple rooms, suites and De Luxe Hotels.

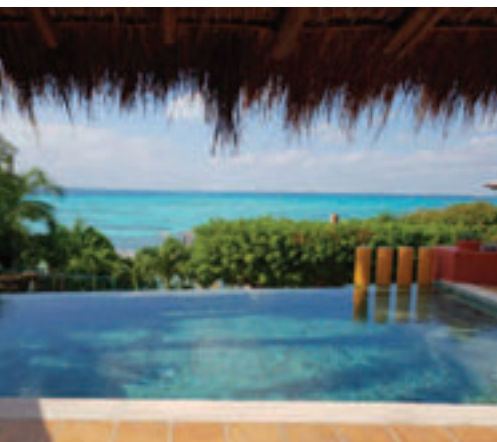
TROPICAL ISLANDS IN THE YUCATAN

ISLA MUJERES web veloso.com/islamujeres

Isla Mujeres, is seven miles across the Bahía de Mujeres from Cancún, and is only five miles long and half a mile wide with a small but perfectly formed downtown area. It is flat, great for strolling around both day and night and is completely surrounded by beaches. The downtown area is relaxed and homely, reflecting its fishing village roots. Evenings and nights turn the island into a heaven of tranquility and beauty with stunning sunsets at fine dining restaurants.

Casa de los Sueños First

The 'House of Dreams' has eight rooms all with ocean view terraces, plus a dream Villa. Each room is thoughtfully decorated with original handcrafts, fabrics and embroideries. Each room has a unique signature and their "story" for your appreciation. There is a swimming pool, a spa and excursions can be arranged at the hotel: cycling, snorkelling, swimming with dolphins or whale sharks (May-Sep), kayaking, fishing and walking trips. Includes return transfers by boat from Puerto Juárez to Isla Mujeres.



Villa Rolandi First

Overlooking the Caribbean and in front of the Lagoon Makax, where its private luxury yacht has its pier, the property consists of 20 luxury Junior Suites, all with Ocean View and private facilities. Evening dinners are an unique event of romanticism and quality food. Connoisseurs come from mainland in their yachts to experience gourmet dining. There is a spa and daily excursions are arranged at the hotel.



HOLBOX web veloso.com/holbox

Located three hours north of Cancún, this largely uninhabited island is an oasis of peace and quiet blessed with a warm, breezy climate and an abundance of natural attractions. It forms part of a national eco-reserve due to its tropical forests, wild beaches, underwater caves and exotic fauna, such as dolphins, whale sharks and flamingos.

Beach view from Casa Sandra



Xaloc Tourist

The hotel has eighteen palapa-thatched bungalows set amid lush tropical gardens. Swimming pools meander between the bungalows, each of which is rustically decorated and features a terrace and hammock for adapting to the laid-back pace of island life. As well as tranquility, the resort also offers fishing, kayaking, snorkelling, horse riding and boat excursions.

Room at Xaloc



Casa Sandra First

Set on the peaceful and relaxing beach of Holbox, Casa Sandra is a small boutique hotel with a warm, cosy and hospitable atmosphere. The rooms and public areas are rustic in style, decorated with Sandra's own artistic flourishes, and the complete absence of televisions or telephones. There is a living room, swimming pool, restaurant, garden, and direct access to the beach.

Room at Casa Sandra



PLAYA DEL CARMEN

web veloso.com/playacar

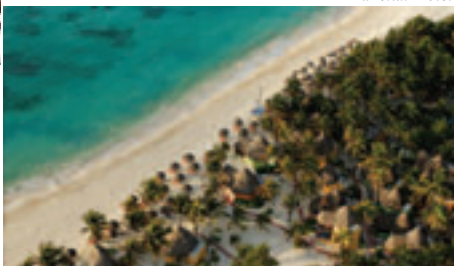
Once a small village, Playa del Carmen with its low rise architecture, is now a favourite of Europeans who enjoy a small town with a relaxed Mexican-Caribbean feeling. The main street has many shops, there are long beaches by day and a wide choice of restaurants, shops, large beach bars and a busy nightlife in the evening. Explore the coastline and visit the archaeological sites of Tulum and Cobá and water parks of Xel-há and Xcaret.



Beach at Playa del Carmen



Mahekal Hotel



Mahékal *First*

Nestled between lush tropical gardens, a pristine white sand beach and the turquoise water of the Caribbean Sea, Hotel Mahékal is one of the most picturesque Hotels in Playa del Carmen. 121 rooms divided into three sections, each with a different atmosphere: Caribe Ocean, Caribe Garden view, and Aventura Ocean. All rooms have private facilities, a patio or balcony with hammocks and are air conditioned. Some rooms have their own plunge pool or outdoor shower. In keeping with a relaxed environment, there are no televisions, radios or telephones in the rooms. The Hotels facilities include two pools and jacuzzi, two restaurants and bar. Watersports such as scuba diving or windsurfing can be arranged at the hotel. The hotel is conveniently located close to the shops and restaurants of 5th Avenue, or La Quinta as it is known locally and only 50 minutes from Cancún Airport. The resort offers breakfast and dinner or lunch under a modified plan. Alcohol and some beverages are additional.

Illusion *Tourist*

Illusion is a small hotel in the centre of Playa del Carmen, between the main street "Quinta Avenida" and the beach, located only a few minutes walk down the road. It is ideal for everyone who likes a to be within walking distance of all the attractions, shops, restaurants, bars and the beach. This also means a certain amount of activity and street noise. The hotel is for adults over 18. There are 196 comfortable rooms and suites with private facilities, a restaurant serving breakfast and international cuisine. The roof top has "La Vista" Bar serving drinks and snacks, an outdoor plunge pool (30 sqm), and solarium with sun loungers.

Le Reve *First*

Hotel Le Reve is a charming boutique hotel located on the secluded area of Xcalacoco, 7 km north of Playa del Carmen. With a magnificent white sand beach and stunning turquoise blue waters, this is the perfect scene for a romantic retreat. Le Reve has a contemporary minimal style which is reflected in the white decor and furnishings of the guest rooms and the uncluttered but striking public areas. There are in total 25 chic rooms and suites. The Horizon suite has a queen size bed, spacious bathroom and partial ocean view from its own terrace. The Beach Front Bungalow features one king size bed, private terrace, own plunge pool and spectacular view of the Caribbean Sea. The hotel has a lovely swimming pool area right by the edge of the beach. There is also a beach bar serving tropical drinks and cocktails. The restaurant and bar have a wonderful evening ambiance. Other facilities include a small spa and fitness room.

PRICES FROM	3 nights	ESCAPE 7 nights
ISLA MUJERES		
Casa de los Sueños	£360	£1635
Villa Rolandi	£516	£1999
HOLBOX		
Xaloc	£580	£1845
Casa Sandra	£934	£2672
PLAYA DEL CARMEN		
Illusion	£220	£1334
Le Reve	£619	£2232
Mahékal	£625	£2246

Prices above are per person in a Standard Room for double occupancy including accommodation and breakfast (Illusion); breakfast and dinner (Mahekal); all Meals and drinks (Le Reve); tax, service charge and private transfers to/from Cancun airport/city. Prices for Triple room, Single room and children are available on request. *ESCAPE price for 7 nights also includes daily flights (one overnight) in economy on British Airways from London Heathrow to Cancun.

Additional Hotels:

Villas Delfines, Villas Paraiso del Mar



RIVIERA MAYA

Viceroy Deluxe web veloso.com/viceroyrm

The Resort

Viceroy Riviera Maya is a secluded luxury resort and spa on the Riviera Maya in Playa del Carmen. Twenty-nine private luxury villas each with private pool are carefully constructed with natural wood and stones and surrounded by luscious gardens.

The Rooms

Each villa features an outdoor terrace with chaises-longue, dining table, handmade crochet hammock and outdoor shower. Spacious indoor bathroom with standing shower, separate basins and large closets. All beds feature Egyptian cotton sheets, duvet covers and glorious down pillows.

The Restaurant & Bar

La Marea restaurant offers dishes with Mediterranean and Mexican influences. Fresh seafood and an array of chef's specialties are prepared daily. The pastry chef prepares breads, rolls, and croissants from a variety of fragrant doughs and local ingredients. The wine list represents much of the world, most notable are French, Italian and Spanish wines. The Coral Grill & Bar serves snacks and light dishes. The bar is one of the most exciting places on the property with views of the Mayan sunset and the island of Cozumel, great to meet friends for a cocktail before dinner.

The Spa

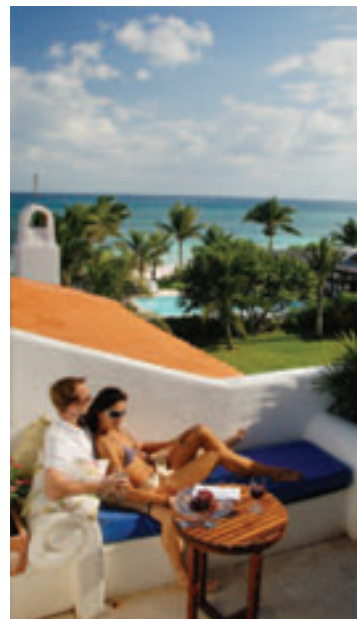
The full service spa at Viceroy offers guests a steam room, jacuzzi, swiss showers with adjustable water pressure, and individual treatment areas. There is also a seaside spa area for Temazcal bath, massages, facials, treatments, tai chi, and yoga. The spa's philosophy is that the sea is a fountain of energy, where we achieve equilibrium, comfort and gain the ability to restore indispensable vital elements. The Temazcal bath combines a cleansing sweat bath with herbs, flowers, music, and a soothing massage. There is also a full service beauty salon.





Esencia Deluxe [web veloso.com/esencia](http://veloso.com/esencia)

Sited on the Xpu-Ha beach, in Mexico's Riviera Maya, along a two-mile stretch of white powder sand and against a sea of crystal blue water, surfaces Esencia, the essence of simplicity, elegance and beauty. Spacious accommodations, twenty-nine in total, feature mesmerizing sea and garden views along with large terraces, deep soaking plunge pools and private solariums. Guests can experience Esencia in an ocean view suite, garden suite or in a private home.



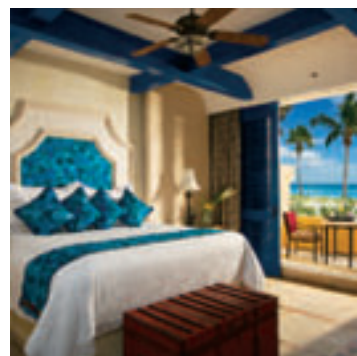
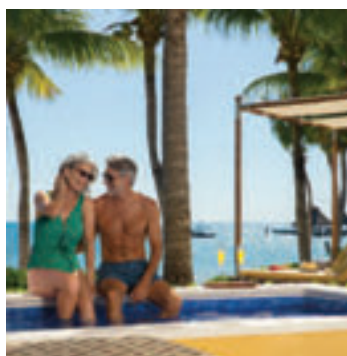
Zoëtry, *Paraiso de la Bonita* Deluxe All inclusive [web veloso.com/zoetry](http://veloso.com/zoetry)

Zoëtry is located in Puerto Morelos, close to the Marine Park, in 14 acres of forest, 20 minutes south of Cancún, and with a long stretch of pristine white sandy beach. There are 90 luxury fully equipped suites with terraces overlooking the sea and direct access to the beach, and large bathroom. The stylish decoration includes many works of art belonging to the owner's private collection. Everything is included from the minibar in your room to the gourmet restaurants, cocktails, national and international premium brands, 24-hour private in-room dining, laundry service and unlimited worldwide telephone calls. Zoëtry also has a superb spa where all the facilities and many, but not all, treatments are included. There is fresh water and a salt water swimming pool, both have waiter service as does the beach.



PRICES FROM	3 nights	ESCAPE 7 nights
RIVIERA MAYA		
Esencia	£1513	£3434
Viceroy	£985	£3096
Zoëtry	£958	£2966

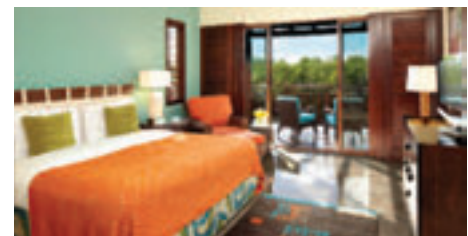
Prices above are per person in a Standard Room for double occupancy including accommodation and Meals as described, tax, service charge and private transfers to/from Cancun airport.
Prices for Triple, Single and DeLuxe rooms and Children are available on request.
'ESCAPE' price also includes EXCURSION full day to Tulum and Coba and FLIGHTS in economy to Cancun from London Gatwick Airport





Fairmont Mayakoba Deluxe [web veloso.com/mayakoba](http://veloso.com/mayakoba)

Tucked under a forest canopy and designed around crystal clear waterways, with the sense of a Mexican home, there are luxury amenities including 401 well-appointed bedrooms and 34 beach and lagoon casitas, all with one king or two queen beds, spacious bathrooms, with a soaker tub and separate shower, some with private terrace or well sized balcony and air conditioning. Guests spend their days horse riding on the beach, enjoying a round at Mayakoba's own golf course or their private spa. There are three restaurants, bars and a cafe. Playa del Carmen is located only 10 minutes away. The town is lively in the evenings with a good choice of restaurants, bars and shops.



Secrets Maroma Beach First All inclusive

Secrets is a large Adults only, All Inclusive resort, right on the beach and an isolated location, allowing you quiet long walks and privacy. The buildings surround a large swimming pool and gardens. You have an All Inclusive choice of meals at six a-la-carte gourmet restaurants with French, Mexican, Asian, Italian Seafood cuisine, buffet venue, "barefoot" grill and cafe plus room service and special diets. The rooms are well decorated, spacious and all the modern services and facilities for your comfort. There is a wide range of day activities and evening entertainment.

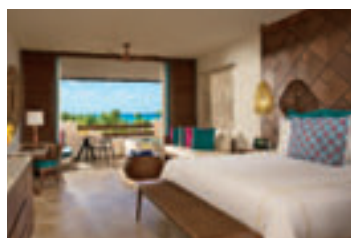


PRICES FROM	3 nights	ESCAPE 7 nights
MAYAKOBA		
Fairmont Mayakoba	£597	£2246
MAROMA		
Secrets Maroma Beach	£910	£2878
TULUM		
Be Tulum	£1486	£4262
Rosa del Viento	£725	£1658
Dreams Tulum	£710	£2494

Prices above are per person in a Standard Room for double occupancy including accommodation and Breakfast, tax, service charge and private transfers to/from Cancun airport or hotels.

Prices for New Year, Christmas, Triple, Single and Deluxe rooms and Children Discounts are available on request.

*ESCAPE price for 7 nights also includes daily flights (one overnight) in economy on British Airways from the London to Cancun.



TULUM

web veloso.com/tulum

The archaeological site at Tulum is the only ancient Mayan village surrounded by a defensive wall and poised over a 15m high cliff overlooking the sea. The coast here has mostly small, low rise hotels on the beach front, aiming to be a “barefoot paradise”. Nearby you can visit the ancient Mayan site of Cobá, with magnificent tall pyramids rising above dense forest, the nature reserve of Sian Ka’an, swim with dolphins or swim and snorkel in the canals and the underground rivers at Xcaret and Xel-Ha. Life here is slow and simple.



Rosa del Viento Boutique First

Rosa del Viento is located right on the beach, south of Tulum and close to Punta Allen and Sian Ka’an reserve. The sand is white, the sea turquoise green and you are close to the barrier reef. It has 10 rooms on the seafront and 16 facing the gardens, all have balconies or terraces and modern amenities, including internet. The restaurant is a large wooden palapa with a terrace, thatched roof and romantic lighting overlooking the beach and the sea, and serving international and local cuisine. There is no swimming pool but, on the beach you have stylish chaise longues and thatched sunshades to unwind.



Be Tulum Rustic Luxury

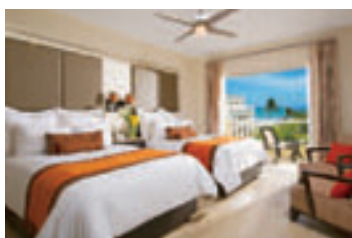
Be Tulum is Being Unique, a lifestyle Hotel, Wellness Spa and private Villas located on Tulum beach close to Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve. Step out of the hotel garden, straight onto the beach and the beautiful, turquoise green Caribbean sea. On the sand, you have individual double sunbeds and wicker chairs to relax surrounded by palm trees, listening to the song of the ocean.

Be, has 64 suites with 46 m2 or more, surrounded by tropical vegetation, all with balcony, beautiful private bathroom, premium linen, deposit box, bath robes, iPod dock and wi-fi, and view of the garden or the sea. Decorated with wooden floors and pastel tones inspired by local materials. There is a swimming pool, “raw” beach bar, a wood burning grill/barbecue and a restaurant with a menu inspired by flavours from India, Morocco, Argentina, Spain.



Dreams Tulum for families First

Located on one of the most beautiful beaches, surrounded by lush tropical trees & fine white sand. The 458 luxury suites and guest rooms are elegantly decorated in a colonial style, have their own patio or balcony, with air-conditioning, TV, CD/DVD player. Ideal for families with a variety of activities including cycling, water sports, tennis, dance lessons and a children’s club. There is a large swimming pool, jacuzzi, spa, fitness centre.



HIDDEN VILLAGES & BACKROADS

The Balam Tour

14 night itinerary:

Valladolid - 1 night

Dzidzantún - 3 nights

Mérida - 4 nights

Celestún Reserve - 2 nights

Chichén-Itzá - 2 nights

Tulum - 2 nights

web veloso.com/balam



Journey the backroads to discover seldom visited corners of the Yucatán. History unfolds in the colonial splendour of the cities and the half-forgotten pyramids of ancient civilisations, while dense forests and coastal mangrove provide habitats for wildlife and birdwatching

Day 1 Direct non-stop flight to Cancún. On arrival you will be met and taken to the colonial city of Valladolid, staying for 1 night with the following morning to explore the small town. (B)

Days 2-4 Transfer north to Ek Balam, whose main temple has superb stuccos. Continue to the rural Mayan town of Dzidzantún, where you stay for three nights in a colonial Hacienda converted to a character hotel. As part of your accommodation you have included bicycles for you to explore the grounds and birdwatching. Visit the coastal town of San Crisanto and take a boat trip to explore the mangroves of the nature reserve. Visit the ancient settlement of Izamal and the beautifully preserved convent of San Antonio de Padua. (B)

Days 5-8 Morning drive along the coastal road with the Gulf on one side and lagoons with flamingos on the other, visiting Xcambo, an important trading centre with impressive Mayan temples, and Progreso where you can stroll and have lunch. Continue to Mérida staying for four nights. One day is at leisure to explore the colonial city. One full day excursion on the Franciscan route visiting the church of Maní, with its open-air chapel built to evangelise natives, the Mayan market village of Oxkutzcab, and one day to the magnificent archaeological sites of Uxmal and Kabah, with intricate, incomparable Puuc stonework. (B)

Days 9-10 Transfer to Celestún Nature Reserve staying for 2 nights. One day to view wildlife and flamingoes. (B)



Tulum Ruins, Days 12-14

Days 11-12 Departure to the ancient pyramids of Chichén Itzá staying for two nights. Explore the extensive site on your own, morning and afternoon, avoiding the midday heat and daytrippers. (B)

Days 13-14 Drive to Cobá, explore the great pyramids set amidst dense forest and onto the coast staying for two nights at Tulum on the Caribbean coast, with one full day to visit the archaeological site

on the coast and relax by the beach. Transfer to Cancún on Day 15 for your direct flight non-stop to London, arriving the following Day 16. (B)

The Balam Tour departs every day, 16 days INCLUDING: 14 nights' accommodation with breakfast, all flights (1 overnight), transfers, excursions and transport as shown. Please refer to pages 190 - 193 for further details of what is included.



PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL TOUR GUIDELINE PRICES - Departure every week

	Tourist			First		
	1 Single Traveller	Double	Own Room	1 Single Traveller	Double	Own Room
BALAM Tour						
25Dec-21Jun, 17Aug-12Dec	£3814	£2692	£3560	£4661	£3158	£4281
22Jun-16Aug, 13Dec-24Dec	£4175	£3063	£3921	£5022	£3519	£4642
SISAL Tour	Deluxe					
25Dec-21Jun, 17Aug-12Dec	£6925	£4122	£6320			
22Jun-16Aug, 13Dec-24Dec	£7286	£4463	£6681			

GUIDELINE TOUR PRICES are all per person, subject to availability, as all services are booked when you pay your deposit. Please refer to our website veloso.com for current prices and any special offers available. To obtain a Guaranteed Price for your travel dates, please call 020 8762 0616, email travel@veloso.com, or contact our appointed travel agents. Prices for Special Events, New Year's Eve, Christmas, Easter on request.

FLIGHTS on BRITISH AIRWAYS or VIRGIN departing from London Gatwick and Taxes, are included. UPGRADE to Business Cabin seat add: £1786 in High Season / £2216 in Low Season; Premium Economy Seat : £580

HOTELS used, descriptions and photographs on our website, veloso.com/balam & veloso.com/sisal

TAILOR-MADE SERVICE: Please enquire for a personalised itinerary to fulfil your individual requirements. We can combine hotels, change route, excursions and we can offer triple rooms, suites and De Luxe Hotels.

LUXURY COLONIAL HACIENDAS & THE CARIBBEAN SEA

The wealth produced by planting Sisal is visible in the opulent country Haciendas of the Yucatán, now converted into small, deluxe, character hotels. Enjoy the colonial decoration, architecture and furniture, gardens and swimming pool. Visiting the impressive Mayan Pyramids as well as the cities and small villages, before retiring to the Caribbean coast for a spot of sea breeze, sun and swimming at a beach resort.

The Sisal Tour

14 night Itinerary

Cancún - 1 night

Hacienda San José - 3 nights

Hacienda Campeche - 3 nights

Hacienda Mérida - 2 nights

Hacienda Chichén Itzá - 1 night

Deluxe Beach Resort Esencia - 4 nights

web veloso.com/sisal



Campeche Fort, Days 5-7



Caribbean Sea, Days 11-14

Day 1 Depart on a daytime, direct, non-stop flight on British Airways to **Cancún** in the Yucatán peninsula. Arrival transfer. You should not sleep on the daytime flight so that on arrival, you are ready for a good night's sleep, avoiding jetlag. (B)

Days 2-4 In the morning you will be driven to the colonial **Hacienda San José** converted to a luxury hotel and stay for three nights. Two days free to enjoy the tranquil gardens and park of the Hacienda, swimming pool, excellent cuisine and explore the countryside. (B)

Days 5-7 Visit Hacienda Temozon and the archaeological site at Uxmal with elegant Puuc architecture and intricate decorations, on the way to **Hacienda Campeche** staying for three nights. Two days to visit the surrounding Mayan villages, the Mayan ruins at Edzná and explore the colonial city of Campeche. (B)

Days 8-9 Transfer to Mérida for two nights at **Hacienda**. One full day to enjoy the Mexican feel of this historic city. (B)

Day 10 Morning transfer to the town of **Izamal** to visit its magnificent colonial monastery, and continue to **Chichén Itzá** staying for one night. Time to explore on your own the grandiose, austere and extensive Mayan archaeological site, one of the largest cities, (AD600-900) with the Kukulcan Temple pyramid El Castillo, the Ball Court, Temple of Warriors and El Caracol astronomical observatory. (B)

Campeche, Days 5-7



Days 11-14 Visit the "human sacrifice cenote" of Dzitnup and continue to the **Caribbean coast** with turquoise clear water and beautiful sandy beaches, staying for 4 nights in the tranquility, beauty and comfort of **Hotel Esencia**. Please refer to page 156 for description and images. (B)

On **Day 15** transfer to **Cancún** airport for your flight home arriving day 16.

The Sisal Tour PRICE ON PAGE 160 departs every day, 16 days including 14 nights' all flights (1 overnight), transfers, accommodation with breakfast, excursions and transport as shown. Please refer to pages 190 - 193 for further details of what is included in your tour.

Hacienda San Jose, Days 2-4



THE MAYAN ROUTE

The Pacal Tour: Mexico, Belize, Guatemala

21 night itinerary:

Mexico City - 3 nights

Mérida - 3 nights • Chichén Itzá - 1 night

Lamanai Lodge - 2 nights • Mountain Pine Ridge - 2 nights

Tikal - 2 nights • Aguateca - 1 night

Antigua - 1 night • Chichicastenango - 1 night

Lake Atitlán - 2 nights • Antigua - 3 nights

The mighty Maya and Aztec civilisations flourished for centuries building sprawling cities with fabulous pyramids and temples before they mysteriously weakened and abandoned their monuments to the encroaching jungle. Admire colonial architecture, traditional weavings and markets, blending with the culture of their descendent.

[web veloso.com/pacal](http://veloso.com/pacal)



Teotihuacan pyramids outside Mexico City, Day 2

Days 1-3 Depart Friday for Mexico City, arriving in the evening. Next morning we visit the local market, view paintings, stop at the Archaeological Museum and continue to Teotihuacán Aztec complex dominated by the Pyramid of the Sun. Next day at leisure to enjoy local Sunday activities and a stroll. (B)

Days 4-6 Fly to Mérida for three nights. The city has many delightful colonial buildings, painted in soft pastel

colours, enclosing airy colonial patios which blend with strong Mayan influences. Spend the day at leisure exploring the city, museums and markets, the surrounding countryside at Izamal or Celestun Nature Reserve. Full day visit to Uxmal, showing fine examples of the ornate Puuc style with intricate stone lattice work, mosaics and pyramids. (B)

Day 7 We depart for Chichén Itzá, a mighty Mayan site dominated by El Castillo, full of cosmological significance, with steps, panels and terraces depicting various stages of the Mayan calendar. (B)

Days 8-9 Morning to explore at Chichén Itzá, journey to Cancun airport for the flight to Belize City. Transfer to Lamanai Lodge staying two nights. Full day excursion to visit Mayan ruins and explore the flooded forest (B,L,D)

Days 10-11 Transport to Mountain Pine Ridge for 2 nights among pine forest with ferns, hills and waterfalls. (B)

Days 12-13 Transfer to Tikal in Guatemala staying at the nearby lodge for 2 nights. Full day to explore the vast ruins, temples and massive pyramids standing high above the surrounding dense tree canopy. Early morning walk in the magical tranquillity of the protected

forest where numerous monkeys and birds find refuge from encroachments. (B)

Days 14 Drive to Flores, continue to Sayaxche and then by canoe to the ruins of Ceibal, hardly excavated, seldom visited and hidden deep in the forest. Continue by canoe to our Jungle Lodge overlooking Petexbatun lagoon and engulfed by the forest. Stay one night in a simple bungalow with facilities. (B,L,D)

Days 15-16 Morning walk in the forest to the unique site of Aguateca where an ancient civilisation used a deep ravine to protect their stronghold. Return to Flores, fly to Guatemala City and transfer to Antigua for one night. Antigua has cobbled streets and Spanish colonial architecture, with delightful interior courtyards restored to their original splendour. Afternoon transfer to Chichicastenango staying one night. (B)

Day 17-18 Visit the Sunday market with an abundance of colour in the weavings, masks and flowers that adorn the stalls. In the afternoon continue to Panajachel lying at the foot of volcanoes, staying 2 nights on the shores of Lake Atitlán. Boat trip across the lake to visit Santiago Atitlán, a village where local people retain their strong Indian culture and traditions (B)

Days 19-21 Transfer to Antigua for three nights. Two full days to explore at leisure this charming colonial city with cobblestone streets and ancient courtyards. Admire and perhaps purchase some wonderful colourful weavings as tapestries. Depart for your flight home on Day 22, arriving home on Day 23 (Saturday). (B)

The Pacal Tour PRICES ON PAGE 34 Departs Fridays, returns Saturday - 23 days INCLUDING: 21 nights' accommodation and breakfast (B), all flights (1 overnight), all transfers, excursions, English-speaking guides, all transport and meals (B,L,D) as shown. Please see pages 190 - 193 for further details of what is included.



Chichicastenango Market, Day 18



WORLDS APART

The Ambos Mundos Tour:



Tranquil life in Cuba

Day 1 Departure on a daytime flight to Havana, arriving in the evening and transfer to Old Havana, staying for five nights with four full days to explore. (B)

Days 2-3 Full day guided tour of Havana including a walking tour of Old Havana, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with the most beautiful palaces of Spanish baroque architectural style. Visit Revolution Square, followed by the Memorial to José Martí and the Museum of the Revolution ending on the seafront at the Malecón. The following day is free to explore this fascinating city. (B)

Day 4 Full day tour to the countryside out of the city towards Viñales, an area of gigantic rock formations rising out of the flat, green landscape. Visit the small provincial town with its colonial architecture and also learn about the tobacco process. Visit the surrounding area and unique landscapes before returning to Havana in the late afternoon. (B,L)

Day 5 Day free to explore Havana's quiet streets, markets and museums, sit in a cafe and absorb the atmosphere, or take and optional excursions to the Bay of Pigs, Hemmingway's house, the beach, Cienfuegos or Trinidad to the south. (B)

Days 6-7 Transfer to the airport for

the flight to Mérida in the Yucatán, southern Mexico, staying for two nights at a hotel by the main square. Full day tour to the ancient Mayan city of Uxmal, with magnificent pyramids classified a UNESCO World Heritage Site. (B)

Days 8-9 Morning transfer to Chichén Itzá and in the afternoon tour the archaeological site. Stay overnight at the nearby hotel Mayaland. Chichén Itzá is a large site with numerous ruins and pyramids spread over a large area. It is best to take your time visiting, avoiding the heat of the midday sun. Following morning free to continue exploration and late afternoon transfer to Playa del Carmen for four nights. (B)

Days 10-13 At leisure in Playa del Carmen staying at Mahekal Hotel, page 155. Other hotels on pages 154 to 159. Transfer to Cancún Airport for the return flight home, arriving on Day 14. (B)

Ambos Mundos Tour PRICES PAGE 38
Departs Thursday, returns Wednesday - 14 days, INCLUDING: 12 nights' accommodation, all flights, transfers to/from airports and excursions with English-speaking guide, transport and meals (B,L,D) as shown on the itinerary. Please see pages 190 - 193 for further details of what is included.

Cuba's revolutionary society and its Spanish colonial history present major differences as well as similarities with the Mexican Yucatán, where an identical Spanish heritage blends with the ancient archaeological sites of the Mayas, and modern American influences. So close and yet so far apart.

Cuba & The Mexican Yucatán

12 night itinerary:

Havana - 5 nights

Mérida - 2 nights

Chichén Itzá - 1 night

Playa del Carmen - 4 nights

web veloso.com/ambosmundos



Chichén Itzá Days 8-9



Cuban Beach

