



Picture 1: Paseo de la Reforma

Day 2 Mexico City - Guided sightseeing of Mexico City. Your guided tour takes you to the *Zócalo*, Mexico City's main square. This was the very heart of the Aztec empire before Cortés and his *conquistadores* leveled the area. Picking up the leftover pieces (including stones from the temples of Tenochtitlán and Moctezuma's residence), they then adorned the square with a cathedral and royal palace (dating back to 1523). Enter the patio of the Palacio Nacional, where viceroys were once entertained by bullfights. Here you can admire Diego Rivera's renowned murals—painted over the course of 22 years and covering 850 square feet, the murals chart Mexico's history throughout the ages. Upon exiting, look for the Bell of Dolores, once rung to inspire the Mexican people to fight for their independence. Then cross the perfectly square square (exactly 240 meters on each side) to North America's largest cathedral; step inside for a look at the Altar of the Kings. Back outside; see the Templo Mayor, remarkable Aztec

ruins. Continue on to Chapultepec Park. **Visit to the Museum of Anthropology.** A trip to Mexico City would not be complete without a visit to its Museo Nacional de Antropología. Built of marble, volcanic rock, and wood, the museum houses over two miles of items ranging from ancient archaeological artifacts to the treasures of Mexico's great civilizations. The stone homage to Tlaloc, god of rain, greets you as you enter the museum. Once inside, keep your eyes open for the Aztec calendar stone and Montezuma's headdress.

Picture 2: Zócalo, Mexico City's main square





Picture 3: Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Day 3 Mexico City - Guided visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The first stop on today's excursion is the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose construction was spurred by a miracle. According to legend, a peasant named Juan Diego had a vision of the Virgin on the same site where the shrine now stands in the Virgin's honor. **Guided visit to the Teotihuacán Pyramids.** Continue on to the awe-inspiring pyramids at Teotihuacán, mysteriously abandoned over a millennium ago. Built more than 2,000 years ago by a people we know very little about, the complex was later appropriated by the Aztecs who gave the area its name (meaning "Place of the Gods"). Traverse the Avenue of the Dead and climb the Pyramids of the Sun and Moon, architectural feats complemented by the surrounding mountains.

*Picture 4:
pyramids at
Teotihuacán,
abandoned
over a 1000
years ago.*



Day 4 Mexico City – Mérida - Flight to Mérida. Fly to Mérida, capital of the Yucatán state. **Guided visit to Uxmal.** Journey to the Mayan city of Uxmal (pronounced "ooshmahl"). To this day scientists are still debating why the Maya periodically abandoned their great cities. Although Uxmal means "thrice built," it was actually built and rebuilt at least five times, with many parts dating from the 6th century. Your tour shows you the most interesting features of this mysterious site. See the Magician's Pyramid, allegedly built overnight by a dwarf-magician, and the Governor's Palace, a stunning testament to Mayan architectural sophistication. You'll also see the fascinating Nunnery Quadrangle and learn more about the handprints often attributed to Itzamná, god of the sky and sun.

Picture 5: Mayan City of Uxmal





Picture 6: Mérida, Capital of Yucatan, Mexico. It was given the name Mérida because of the many stone buildings built by the Mayans which reminded the Spaniards of similar structures erected by the Romans in the city of the same name in their homeland. The Mayan name for this city is T'ho or Tiho, and Maya descendants still refer to her that way today. This grand Maya city reached its peak during the 800 AD.



Picture 7: Sacred Mayan City of Chichén Itzá,

Day 5 Mérida – Guided sightseeing of Mérida. An expert local guide introduces you to the sights of Mérida, once the ancient Mayan capital of T'ho. Visit the Government Palace and the adjacent lemon-colored cathedral (partially built from the stones of Mayan temples destroyed by the *conquistadores*). Recall the colonial era as you pass by the local architecture, continuing on to Progreso Beach on the Gulf of Mexico.

Day 6 Mérida – Cancún – Guided sightseeing of Chichén Itzá. Journey through the Yucatán to the sacred Mayan city of Chichén Itzá, mysteriously abandoned in the 7th century A.D. One of antiquity's most spectacular ceremonial centers was built here, dedicated to Chac, god of rain. Gaze up at the 365 steps of the mighty pyramid of El Castillo, which once served as a giant calendar more accurate than our own. On your guided tour, also learn about a perilous ballcourt game the Maya played here – players could not touch the ball with their hands as all round objects were considered holy. (Some scientists believe this explains why the wheel was never developed in the area.) **Visit to Cenote X-Keken.** You'll also stop at Cenote X-Keken, a natural well found deep inside a subterranean cave. (Keep in mind that rivers in the Yucatán flow underground.) **Transfer to Cancún.** Journey to the tropical resort of Cancún, home to sandy white beaches neighboring the crystal blue waters of the Caribbean. Aided by computer technology, the Mexican government actually selected Cancún as the perfect spot for a resort in 1967. Building began in Cancún in 1970 – and the rest is history.



Picture 8: Pleasant Endings - Fun in the Sun on Scenic Cancun Beaches

Day 7 Cancún – Free day in Cancún. Relax on the sandy beaches of this warm aquatic resort, named after a Mayan word for “pot of gold.” **Or, optional excursion to Xcaret.** Alternatively, (extra fee) take an optional excursion to Xcaret, a natural park filled with plenty of outdoor activities to keep you entertained all day long! Take a dip in pristine lagoons alongside colorful tropical fish and marvel at the aquarium’s sea creatures. Xcaret also boasts the world’s largest butterfly enclosure and an apiary (a home for bees – don’t worry, though, they’re stingless!)

Days 8, 9, 10 Free time in Cancún. Day 11 Flight home. (Please note, if you cannot stay for the full 11 days, a flight home can be arranged for day 8.)

Tour Agency Charges: Youth Rate: For participants who will be 25 years of age or younger at the date of departure, the total fixed price is \$1,792. This is paid directly to the tour agency. It includes round-trip airfare, also flight from Mexico City to Mérida, private motor-coaches throughout the country, all airport transfers, all airport departure taxes, high season surcharge, lifetime tour agency membership, 10 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms, breakfast and dinner daily, full-time resident, bi-lingual Tour Director, 5 sightseeing tours led by licensed local guides, 6 visits to special attractions (such as famous pyramids and museums) and one walking tour. Under this rate, students are grouped together with 3 or 4 students per room. **Adult Rate:** For participants who will be 26 years or older at the date of departure there is an adult supplement charge of \$330 per person for a total fee of \$2122 per person. This fee includes everything listed above. However, adults are grouped at just 2 per room.

SUNY – Oneonta Academic Fees: All participants enrolled for 3 credits will pay a total tuition fee of \$181 per credit for New York State residents or \$429 per credit for non-residents of New York. All participants enrolled on a non-credit basis will pay a flat, non-credit, participation fee of \$450 in lieu of tuition. (Of course, participants who enroll on a non-credit basis will not have to do any of the academic assignments.)

Application Deadline: To reserve a place in this program, you should complete and submit an application to Dr. Johnson and Dr. Allen as soon as possible. When the application is submitted to the professors, you will be asked to pay your \$95 lifetime membership fee to the tour company. The

company will subsequently inform you of the due date for additional payments. All travel payments must be made to the tour company by **September 19, 2004** in order to avoid extra late fees. After the 19th applications will be accepted as long as there is space available; however, the tour company will add a late fee.

You may obtain application forms and instructions from Dr. Kenneth Johnson, Department of Geography, 322 Milne Library, SUNY-Oneonta 13820. Telephone (607) 436-3379 or contact Dr. Tracy Allen via e-mail at: allenth@oneonta.edu

EF Tours - We will use the largest provider of educational tours in the U.S. as the travel/tour company for this course. Each year they take more than 70,000 travelers on various tours throughout the world. The travel company offers various types of optional insurance which are explained in the application materials. **Our EF tour number is 228931.**

So, Is It Safe For Me To Travel In Mexico?

Mexico is a safe place for Americans to travel. Theft is a worldwide phenomenon and does occur in Mexico. Generally these crimes are non-violent. Use common sense and the same caution that you would exercise in any location where you are a tourist. Do not wear expensive jewelry, do not flash lots of money, watch your belongings, and do not openly proclaim how great it is to live in the more developed "civilized" United States - generally avoid being an obnoxious tourist. Button or Velcro your pockets with valuables in crowded locations in order to stop pick-pocketing. Keep your money in two or three locations on your person and preferably under your clothing. Always be alert of your surroundings.

