
GEEO ITINERARY

Central Mexico 12/30/2023

Day 1: Mexico City Arrive at any time.

Arrive in Mexico City at any time. Check into our hotel and enjoy the city. The day is free to spend at your leisure exploring the city until our welcome meeting this evening. Check the notice boards or ask at reception for the exact time and location of the group meeting, typically 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. After the meeting, you might want to head out for a meal in a nearby local restaurant to further get to know your tour leader and traveling companions. Please make every effort to arrive on time for this welcome meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up.

Day 2: Mexico City (B) Spend a free day in Mexico City learning about Mexican history and culture. Opt to check out the sprawling zócalo (main square), visit the Frida Kahlo museum in vibrant Coyoacán, or view impressive Maya and Aztec artifacts at the National Anthropology Museum.

Mexico City is North America's largest city with 9.2 million inhabitants in the city proper and 21.8 million in the urban area. The city is built on the ruins of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan and later became the capital of New Spain and eventually an independent Mexico. Take advantage of some free time to explore this amazing city. Opt to visit the famed "Blue House" where Frida Kahlo was born, lived, and died, or explore the Juarez neighborhood, an area teeming with restaurants, bars, parks, and boutique shops. In the historic city center, see Diego Rivera's famous mural, *The History of Mexico*, at the Palacio Nacional. The National Museum of Anthropology in Chapultepec is one of the best museums in the world.

Day 3: Mexico City/Puebla (B) Rise early and explore the ancient city of Teotihuacan on a guided tour. Travel to Puebla and enjoy an orientation walk downtown.

During a guided tour of Teotihuacan northeast of Mexico City, you will climb the Pyramid of the Sun and the Pyramid of the Moon and be rewarded with sweeping views of the archaeological site. Bring water and wear a hat and solid walking shoes. The ancient city was built around 100 BC, more than one thousand years before the arrival of the Aztec in central Mexico. The site features the impressive Avenue of the Dead and site of many of the most significant pre-Columbian Mesoamerican pyramids still standing. Later, travel to Puebla and go on an orientation walk downtown with your tour leader. The route will vary, but you can expect to see the zócalo and the artisans' market and visit the historic buildings in the city center of this World Heritage Site. Approximate travel time: 1-2 hrs by private vehicle (Mexico City to Teotihuacán), 2-3 hrs by private vehicle (Teotihuacán – Puebla)

Day 4: Puebla (B) Enjoy a free day to explore the city.

During a free day in Puebla, you can opt to visit a ceramics workshop, sample delicious local specialties, watch a lucha libre wrestling match in the evening, or check out the massive pyramid in Cholula. Also known as Tlachihualtepetl, the Great Pyramid of Cholula is part of a massive archaeological site west of Puebla. Built over the course of several centuries, it is the oldest continuously-occupied ceremonial center in the Western Hemisphere. The pyramid is the largest in the world by volume, covering an area of more than 45 acres and consisting of countless layers of millions of adobe bricks. The Spanish built a church at the very top in 1594. Visit the museum to learn about the site's history, explore its tunnels, and climb to the top of the pyramid for breathtaking views of nearby volcanoes.

Day 5: Puebla/Oaxaca (B) Journey south to beautiful Oaxaca and get a feel for the city on an orientation walk. Then visit the Alebrijes Artisan Community to meet a local artisan and learn more about how alebrijes are crafted.

Travel south from Puebla to beautiful Oaxaca, where you will go on an orientation walk with your tour leader, stopping to visit one of its sprawling markets. You can expect to see the Santo Domingo Cultural Center and walk through the zócalo and the famous 20th November Market. Opt to sample some delicious Oaxacan foods along the way such as mole, tlayudas, or chapulines. After, visit the Alebrijes Artisan Community where you will meet a local artisan and learn more about how alebrijes are crafted. Alebrijes were created by a Mexican artisan named Pedro Linares, who was known for making piñatas and carnival masks. After falling ill and hallucinating, the artist decided to bring what he saw to life by creating the small figurines now known as alebrijes. The fantastical creatures are typically made from papier-mache or wood and are native to the state of Oaxaca, where they are an important part of the region's artistic tradition. The figurines are often hybrids of different animals or have features of multiple animals, and they are typically painted in a variety of bright colors and are often adorned with intricate patterns and details. Approximate travel time: 5h-6h by private vehicle

Day 6: Oaxaca (B) Opt to spend a free day in Oaxaca learning how to make mole in a cooking class, shopping at nearby artisan villages, visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Mitla, or sampling some mezcal at a local distillery. Later that evening, enjoy a cooking demonstration with a local expert and taste a variety of regional dishes.

There's plenty to see and do during your free day in Oaxaca. Feel free to relax and shop at nearby artisan villages, or opt for optional activities like visiting the ruins of Monte Albán, the valley of Mitla ruins, and a petrified waterfall. Later that evening, the group will attend a cooking demonstration in Oaxaca with a local expert who will make a variety of authentic regional dishes. You will learn about the ingredients and taste some samples. Please note this will not be a full meal.

Day 7: Oaxaca (B) Depart at any time.

Our program ends in Oaxaca this morning. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEE0 trips in the same year and receive a discount! GEE0 will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs). If you don't see a program that interests you that pairs with this trip, but still would like to extend your time abroad, let us know. We will work with you to find a non-teacher trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Even better, if you are an educator, we can still offer you a discounted price on the trip you choose! We can also book extra hotel nights for you in Tulum.