

Oaxaca “Mountains-to-the-Sea” Hiking Tour

Hike through remote mountains and ancient villages. Explore the world class archeological sites of the Zapotec and Mixtec cultures. Experience the vibrant craft traditions of Oaxaca’s pueblos. Relax in the luscious warmth and tropical splendor of Mexico’s secluded Oaxaca coast.

Day 1 – Oaxaca, Hostal de La Noria or equivalent (private baths, 52-951-514-7844)

Welcome to beautiful Oaxaca, Mexico! We meet at the Oaxaca City airport and transfer to our charming colonial hotel Hostal de La Noria only a stone’s throw from Oaxaca City’s historic Plaza Principal or “Zócalo”. The Zocalo consists of 2 squares: one with a bandstand and shade trees; the other full of shops and outdoor cafes.

On a typical day people from all walks of life come to the Zocalo - bands and groups of singing children or processions for one of the many festivals celebrated in the city and its surrounding pueblos (villages). There is also plenty of shopping for artisan crafts, paintings, and jewelry. At night the area fills with street musicians and vendors sell a variety of foods and crafts.

We meet our guides in the lobby of the Hostal de La Noria at 9:00 pm for introductions and an orientation. **No meals**

Day 2 – Monte Alban, Hostal de la Noria or equivalent

Today we explore the mysterious ruins of Monte Alban, the ancient capital of the Zapotec culture and arguably the first metropolis in North America. Monte Alban was founded about 500 B.C. and flourished for over a thousand years. Renown for its scenic mountain top location above Oaxaca City, Monte Alban and its Zapotec culture were major influences on the Mayan and Aztec civilizations the followed it.

We return to Oaxaca City for lunch and a tour of its historic Centro including the enormous Templo de Santo Domingo, nearby galleries and a museum featuring the work of the famous Oaxacan artist Rufino Tamayo.

Tonight we dine together near the Zocalo. **B, L, D**

Day 3 – Mitla & Sierra Norte, Llano Grand Community Cabins (shared baths, no phones)

Today we delve deeper into the rich culture of Oaxaca with a visit to the colorful 16th century Templo y Ex-Convento de San Jerónimo in the village of Tlacoahuaya, a fascinating mix of native art and Catholic influence. Don’t forget to see the

ornate 16th century French organ, still used for concerts today.

We then visit the ruins of Mitla (original name of *Liobaa* meaning “House of Tombs”), an ancient site that has been occupied since 900 B.C. It is especially famous for its rich variety of mosaic tile. Archeologists have determined that its unique geometric fretwork designs are sacred representations of the sun, earth, plumed serpents and other sacred symbols. There is also a series of six enormous columns located in the “*Sala de Columnas*” (Room of the Columns). Each column weighs several tons and was brought from quarries miles away without the aid of wheeled transport which was unknown in Pre-Columbian America. Next we travel to Teotitlán del Valle where we visit local artisans for their demonstrations of dying and weaving techniques practiced for over 300 years.

This afternoon we transfer to the remote Sierra Norte Mountains for our exploration of its traditional culture and breathtaking scenery. Our night’s accommodations are in cozy locally owned cabins with bunk beds, a group fireplace and shared bathrooms with hot water.

The people of the pueblos truly enjoy sharing with visitors the beauty of their country. And by staying in their communities, we contribute directly to their economies and help protect these breathtaking mountains and magnificent forests. Tonight we enjoy a pueblo dinner of delicious local fare. **B, L, D**

- Drive time 2 hours
- Optional Hike 3 miles, 300’ elevation gain/loss

Day 4 – Sierra Norte, Latuvi Community Cabins (shared bath, no phones)

Today a local guide leads us on a hike through the forests and mountains held sacred by these people. We travel through fields of wildflowers, enormous agave plants and the pastures of village farms. After the day’s hike we return to the pueblo for a home cooked meal and another peaceful night in the mountains. **B, L, D**

- Hike 7.4 miles, elevation gain 500’/loss 200’
- Drive time 2 hours

Day 5 – Sierra Norte, Hostal de La Noria or equivalent

Another day of hiking beckons as we continue our experience of the life of the Sierra Norte. We descend through farm fields of potatoes, beans and wheat down to dense stands of ancient pine, oak and cedar where bromeliads and wild orchids grow in the spring and early summer and the forest is often filled with the song of birds. As we climb over a rocky ridge with wonderful views the vegetation changes to that of a drier climate with cactus and yucca. On arrival at pueblo Benito Juarez we lunch on locally raised trout.

We then transfer back to Oaxaca City with a stop to see the Tule Tree, claimed to be the largest tree in the Americas. This evening we enjoy Oaxaca's colonial streets before dinner. **B, L,**

- Hike 4.1 miles, 750 feet elevation gain/1200 feet elevation loss

Day 6 – Zaachila, Hostal de La Noria or equivalent

Today we explore Zaachila and its bustling market as villagers from the countryside come to trade their goods and display their wares. Zaachila was the Zapotec capital following the fall of Monte Alban. The name comes from the term "House of Zaachila", a reference to the pre-Colombian Zapotec king Zaachila Yoo.

We also visit the Ex-Convento de Santiago whose construction began in 1535 but stopped in 1570 by order of the king of Spain when the project became too costly to complete. Then we visit San Bartolo Coyotecpec to see its famous shiny black pottery called *San* made with an oxygen reduction kiln.

Back at our hotel we relax before heading out to dinner on our own for our last night in magical Oaxaca City. **B, L**

Day 7 - Puerto Escondido, Hotel Santa Fe (private baths/ 52-954-582-0150)

This morning we're up early for our morning flight across the mountains to Oaxaca's tropical Pacific coast and the seaside Hotel Santa Fe near the fishing village of Puerto Escondido.

The day is a free day to enjoy as you like. Choose from a variety of activities depending on the time of year including biking, tubing on the Colotepec River, a visit to the Chatino villages in the Mixteca Sur, a trip to the national Turtle Museum or to the natural cosmetics factory of Body Shop founder Anita Roddick. Of course, you can opt to just relax on a gorgeous golden sand beach.

Lunch is on our own. But don't forget to return to our lodge overlooking the Pacific for sunset margaritas! Dinner tonight is served at the hotel restaurant and includes the best seafood in town with

all organic produce and lots of vegetarian options. **B, D**

- Flight to Puerto Escondido 1 hour, 14-passenger Caravan plane.

Day 8 – Puerto Escondido, Hotel Santa Fe (private baths).

After breakfast we explore the lush lowland forests of the Oaxacan coast on a jungle hike to an enchanting waterfall and natural swimming pool tucked deep in the forest below the slopes of the Sierra Madre Sur. After time to relax and enjoy this idyllic setting, we return to our hotel for lunch and free time on our own.

At about 3:00 pm we meet again for kayaking on the protected waters of Laguna Manialtepec. We board a launch and cruise into the lagoon where we unload our kayaks and set out on a gentle paddle to observe some of the 270 different bird and animal species that make the lagoon their home. In about an hour and a half we arrive at secluded *La Barra* beach, just in time for the glorious explosion of color that's sunset on the Pacific. We then return to the Hotel Santa Fe for our private farewell dinner. **B,D**

- Jungle Hike 4 miles, 100' elevation gain/loss. Drive time to trailhead 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- Drive time to kayak put-in 25 minutes

Day 9 – Transfer to Airport

Transfer to Puerto Escondido airport for early morning flights back to Oaxaca. We arrive at 8:30 am in Oaxaca for our flights home. **No Meals**

Trip Details

Lodging: Hotel (6 nights), cabins (2 nights)

Trip Length: 9 days/8 nights

Geoup: Minimum 2 / Maximum 12

Activities: Hiking (2 full and 1 half day), kayaking (1/2 day), free day (1 day), ruins tours, city tour, sightseeing, cultural encounters, flights

2011 Dates: November 19-27, December 17-25

2012 Dates: January 14-22, February 11-19, March 10-18, April 14-22, May 26-June 3, October 6-14, October 20-28, November 17-25, December 15-23

Price: \$2498 (extra \$800 per person to confirm with group of 2, extra \$200 for group of 3)

Single Supplement: \$500

Trip Rating: Moderately easy

Meeting Place: On arrival at Oaxaca Airport on Day 1

Trip Conclusion: Oaxaca Airport, Oaxaca, Mexico on Day 9

Price Includes: Day 1 in Oaxaca City and ending with Day 9 in Puerto Escondido (does not include accommodation night of Day 9); flight Oaxaca – Puerto Escondido – Oaxaca; airport transfers on the designated arrival and departure days; all transfers throughout starting from hotel in Oaxaca on Day 2 and ending in the Puerto Escondida on Day 8; all meals as indicated in the detailed itinerary below (B,L,D); local guides; entrance fees to parks and reserves; entrance fees to all archeological sites, national parks, protected areas; visit to sea turtle recuperation project local gratuities to wait-staff, maid service, and porters.

Price Excludes: International and internal flights, except for the roundtrip air from Oaxaca to Puerto Escondido, airport taxes, immigration card (\$17 U.S.), meals preceding breakfast on Day 2, dinner on Day 6, lunch on Day 7 and 8, and all meals following breakfast on Day 9, gratuities to trip leader and local guide in Sierra Nortes.

Itinerary Changes: We reserve the right to change the tour's itinerary including accommodations, route, activities, etc. due to availability, safety considerations, transportation requirements, price changes or any other factors as we deem necessary.

The Next Step...

References Don't take our word for it that The World Outdoors trips are the finest in the adventure travel industry. Ask our past guests. *Call about any of our trips and we'll be happy to refer you to someone who's been there with us.*

The Best Value in Active Travel Guarantee: *We commit to you that all of our trips are of the highest quality at the best value.* If you find a trip of equal quality that matches our itinerary and inclusions at a lower fare within 30 days of booking your trip with us, we will gladly refund the difference. A simple guarantee that assures you of the best trip at the best fare!

How do I join this trip? Call The World Outdoors at (800) 488-8483 and a Trip Consultant will reserve your space(s) or register online at www.TheWorldOutdoors.com. Your travel agent can also book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

Special Requests: If you have any special dietary needs or any special request that will make your trip more enjoyable, please be sure to notify your Trip Consultant or travel agent upon booking.

Then Leave the Rest to Us... Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including your reservation payment receipt and confirmation, travel insurance application, suggestions for preparing for your trip, a packing list, information on pre- and post-trip arrangements, a guest questionnaire and a liability release agreement.

Travel Protection: To make your trip with The World Outdoors even more carefree, we strongly recommend the purchase of our travel insurance plan. Offering comprehensive coverage and peace of mind, our travel insurance plan is designed to protect you in case of lost or damaged luggage, a sudden illness or death in the family, emergency medical expenses and transportation costs, and flight delays. We'd be happy to arrange travel insurance coverage for you, so contact us at (800) 488-8483 with any questions.

How do I book airfare for this trip? Call our in-house travel agent, Sherry Malanify, at 800-488-8483 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time Monday through Friday or you can email her at sherrym@theworldoutdoors.com. Sherry is also available to assist you with pre- and post-lodging needs. If Sherry is unavailable and your needs are urgent, please call James TravelPoints, a local

travel agency, at 800-538-7461 and ask for Georgia (ext 251) or email her at GeorgiaT@travelpoints.com. Be sure to tell her you are traveling with The World Outdoors. Alternatively, you are welcome to book your airfare online, directly with the airline or through your personal travel agent.

Questions & Answers

Weather: The climate of Mexico is extremely varied, ranging from hot dry deserts in the North to wet, humid jungles in the South. Higher elevations tend to be more temperate with mountain peaks that can get chilly. You can expect days in the 60° F – 90° F with nights dropping down to the 40° F – 50° F in the Sierra, and occasionally below freezing! The coast is balmy with hot daytime temperatures between 75° F – 95° F cooling to around 70° F at night. Please note that you will be at 5,085 feet above sea level in Oaxaca City.

Difficulty: moderately easy

Roads & Transport: The group will travel in a 12-15 passenger van.

Children: The tour is adult oriented. Contact us to discuss suitability for people under 18.

Entry Requirements: Effective **January 8, 2007**, all U.S. citizens traveling by air to and from Mexico are required to have a valid passport to enter the U.S. This requirement will include those traveling by land or sea (including ferries) in January 2008. Generally, citizens of all nations require a passport to enter Mexico and most can stay for 90 days without a visa. Be sure your passport is valid for at least six months from your planned arrival date in Mexico. Visit <http://www.traveldocs.com/mx/> for the latest requirements.

Tour Operator: The World Outdoors operates this tour through a company specializing in travel in Mexico. All tours include a bilingual guide knowledgeable in regional history, culture and ecology.

Emergency Contact Information: Our office in Boulder, Colorado is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time 1-800-488-8483. For emergencies outside of our normal business hours call Bill Marriner at 720-289-0460, Sherry Malanify at 303-915-9660, Darcie Carr at 303-595-8561 or Eric Wagner at 303-324-7795.

Journey Mexico is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Saturdays (October-April) 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. They can be reached from the U.S. at 1-800-513-1587 or 011-52-322-225-9872, from outside Mexico +52-322-225-9872 or within Mexico 322-225-9872. After hours, call from the U.S. 011-52-322-225-9821, from outside Mexico +52-322-225-9821 or within Mexico 322-225-9821. + means you need to dial the appropriate international calling code for the country you are calling from before the rest of the number. Ask local information for the correct code.

Accommodations: The lodging described in the above itinerary is what is most often used on the tour. However, alternatives are sometimes used. Descriptions of all the lodges on this tour are below. Those marked * are alternative lodging.

- **Hostal de la Noria:** Our lovely hotel, the Hostal de La Noria, is housed in a beautifully restored colonial mansion in the historic center of Oaxaca near the zocalo. Each room is furnished with beautiful colonial style furniture. An excellent choice if you are looking for a safe, central location with authentic colonial ambiance, but want to keep your budget in check. Charming atrium with fountain and umbrella topped tables, rooftop sun deck, excellent restaurant and bar. <http://www.hostaldelanoria.com/>, 52 (951) 501-5400
- **Hotel Santa Fe:** On the eastern end of Playa Principal and within view of the fabled surf crashing on Playa Zicatela, Hotel Santa Fe is the finest hotel in Puerto Escondido. Excellent service, fresh pools to escape the heat, beautiful ocean views and a restaurant that features the freshest sea food in town and organic vegetarian cuisine combine to make this the only place to stay in Puerto Escondido. <http://www.hotelsantafe.com.mx>, from US 888-649-6407, inside Mexico 52-954-582-0170.
- **Community Cabins:** These community owned lodges are rustic, clean, and safe with both group and private bunk beds, limited double beds as well as plentiful hot water and shared ecological bathrooms. A stay in the Zapotec of the Sierra allows a unique perspective on the traditional lifestyle still lived by these people and contributes directly to their community and preservation of the surrounding forest.

Water: During the trip purified water is always available. Bring at least two 1-liter water bottles or camelback for your personal drinking supply.

Health: Mexico does not require vaccinations before arrival. For more information on travel health issues call the Center for Disease Control at 404-332-4555 or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/camerica.htm>.

Tipping: All tips for waiters, hotel staff, drivers, porters and maid service are included in the trip fee. The only tips not included are for the local guides and the trip leader. The trip leader will organize tips for the local guides, customarily \$5 - \$10 U.S. per day. At the end of the trip it's usual for clients to tip the trip leader. The normal amount is \$7 - \$15 per guest for each day of the trip. Of course, tipping is discretionary and it's up to you on how much you'd like to give. A member of the group typically presents this tip to the trip leader at the end of the tour.