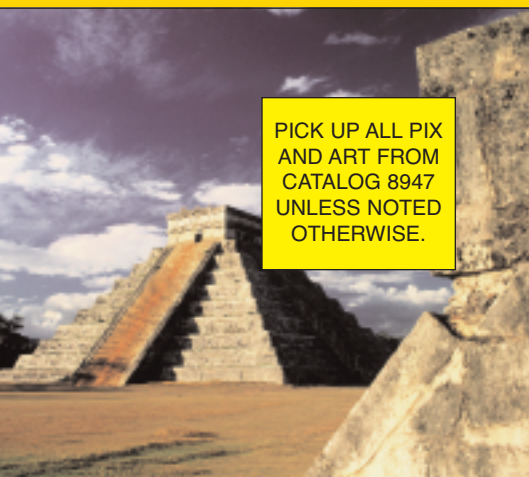


Mexico's Ruta Maya: A Photography Expedition



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8 days • 2009: April 19–26
April 26–May 3

Vivid colors, rich textures, and magnificent sites make Mexico's Maya country an ideal location for photography. Trace the Ruta Maya with photographer Raul Touzon, capturing images of ancient ruins, jungles, and glorious coastlines. Explore Chichén Itzá, discover the Yucatán's natural beauty, and immerse yourself in the culture of the Maya.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Expert

RAUL TOUZON



A resident of Mexico for more than five years, Raul Touzon has traveled extensively in Latin America documenting its indigenous cultures. His evocative photographs have appeared in many publications, including *National Geographic Traveler* and *National Geographic* magazine and are represented in the National Geographic Image Collection. For the last five years Touzon has been a full-time instructor, producing and teaching photography workshops in Mexico.

Raul will accompany both departures.

ITINERARY

Day 1 U.S./Cancún, Mexico

Arrive in Cancún and transfer to Playa del Carmen. Check into the hotel, and gather this evening for a welcome reception and dinner.

Occidental Grand Xcaret (D)

Day 2 Chichén Itzá/Mérida

Discover the enigmatic world of the ancient Maya at Chichén Itzá today. One of the grandest architectural accomplishments of Maya civilization, this city thrived from A.D. 700–900. Explore the Pyramid of Kukulcan, the Observatory, and the Temple of the Warriors, looking for the perfect shot. Continue to Mérida, your home for the next three nights.

Fiesta Americana (B, L, D)

Day 3 Mérida/Celestún

This morning, travel to lovely Celestún, known for its flamingo colonies and fresh water springs. After a seaside lunch, take a boat ride into thick mangroves and photograph the colorful bird colonies nesting along the estuary. Return to Mérida for dinner and stroll along the Paseo Montejo to photograph night scenes. (B, L, D)

Day 4 Umán/Uxmal

Visit the outdoor market in Umán, where traditional Maya sell local goods. Sample Yucatecan cuisine at lunch before continuing to the seventh-century Maya city Uxmal. Walk amid architectural jewels such as the Governor's Palace and the Pyramid of the Magician. Enjoy a dinner of local specialties. (B, L, D)

Day 5 Izamal/Cobá

Go on a morning photo shoot to Izamal, one of Mexico's designated "magical towns." Pass houses painted a rich yellow on a walk to a 16th-century convent. This afternoon, venture into the jungle to the lost Maya city of Cobá. Settle into our hotel,

Above: The mystical Pyramid of Kukulcan in Chichén Itzá was laid out by the ancient Maya to correspond with the equinox and solstice.



located within an ecological reserve.

Occidental Grand Xcaret (B, L, D)

Day 6 Xel-Ha/Tulum/Playa del Carmen

Begin the day at Xel-Ha National Park, where wildlife can be found within the sheltered inlets and lagoons. Continue to the walled city of Tulum, perched on cliffs overlooking a stunning tropical paradise. After dinner, wander into the town of Playa del Carmen to photograph the local nightlife. (B, L, D)

Day 7 Xcaret

Embark on a photographic adventure in the Xcaret. Float on a subterranean river through tunnels carved in the coral formations, and swim in beautiful coves. Visit the botanical gardens, the aquarium, and the butterfly pavilion. Attend *The Xcaret by Night*, an incredible pageant depicting Mexico's rich history. (B, L, D)

Day 8 Cancún/U.S.

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight home. (B)



A horse and carriage await its driver in a sunny spot in Izamal.

INFORMATION

Expedition Cost:

Prices are per person, double occupancy. For a single room, add _____. Airfare is not included in the expedition cost. Round-trip economy airfare between Miami and Cancún is _____ (subject to change).

To reserve space, call 1-866-797-4686 or go to www.nationalgeographicexpeditions.com.