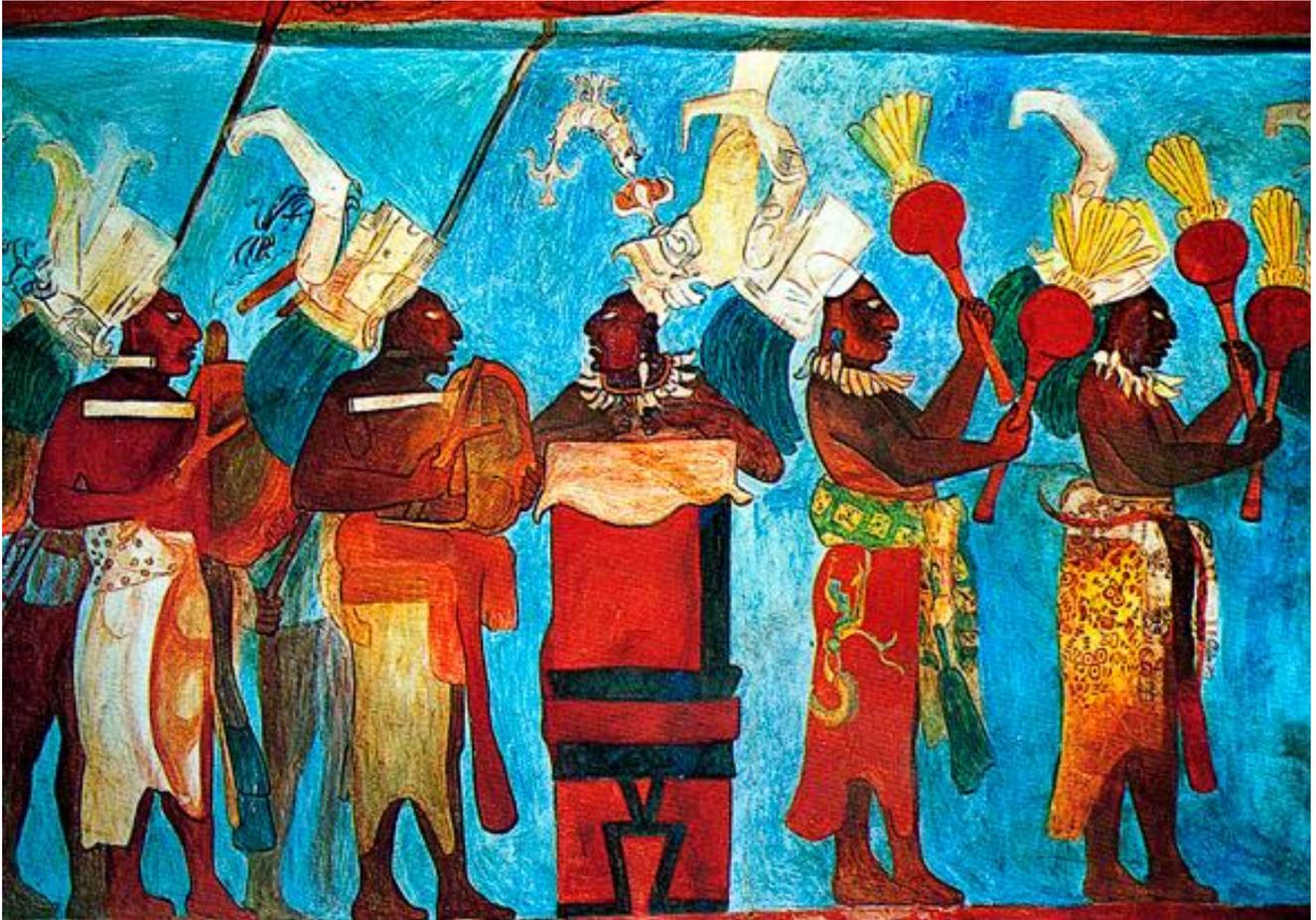




Mexico – Chiapas

Destination Guide and FAQs



First time in Chiapas?

You're in for a treat. Chiapas is Mexico's hidden cultural gem.

*“Chilly pine-forest highlands, sultry rainforest jungles and attractive colonial cities exist side by side within Mexico's southernmost state, a region awash with the legacy of Spanish rule and the remnants of ancient Maya civilization.”
Chiapas travel guide*

If you have been lucky enough to visit Chiapas, you're already in love. But do read on because a few things may have changed.

First off, is Chiapas safe for travellers?

Your perception of safety is important, and we urge you to visit your country's travel advisory consular site. These days, only a few countries do not carry an advisory.

For the most part, Chiapas is considered to be safe for travelers, although Chiapas locals have a history of clashes with the Mexican government. Recently, tensions have abated, though there are often *bloqueos* where locals shut down roads. We stick to the most visited places in Chiapas, also the safest for travelers: San Cristobal de las Casas, San Juan Chamula, Zinacantan, and Palenque. Additionally, we transfer to Chiapas by air, thus avoiding roads where blockades might be set up.

As with any destination, travellers should exercise caution in being out in the dark and carrying valuables. A bonus of group travel is you can always be with a travel companion. Our local office in Canada is on hand to address any concerns.

Do I need a Visa for Mexico?

Visitors from the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. do NOT need a visa to Morocco. Check [this guide](#) for more info. In order to gain entry, you will need a passport valid for 6 months.

If you do need a visa, bear in mind that processing can take 4 to 5 weeks. Please understand that it is your sole responsibility to possess a valid passport and visa prior to embarking on this tour.

What is the time zone in Chiapas?

Chiapas is on Central Standard time, same as in the U.S. (GMT -6, Eastern -1)

When is the best time of year to visit Chiapas?

The best time to visit the main travel destinations in the Central Highlands is in the dry season from late Oct to May. These regions have temperatures that hover around 60-70F all year long. However, jungle and rainforest areas such as Palenque can be much hotter with high humidity. Coastal Chiapas is best visited between Nov and March. November is also rich with festivals, particularly The Day of the Dead.

How strenuous is this tour?

If you can walk comfortably at a moderate pace for one-hour stretches, you can do this tour. In addition we have private bus transfers on crowded urban roads. The longest transfer 3-4 hrs with breaks for washrooms. We will take a private boat road in a spectacular canyon.



I hear only 5* hotels are good enough for travel in Chiapas. Correct?

Incorrect. One of the best ways to experience Chiapas is to stay in atmospheric small hotels for architecture, cultural relevance, comfort, safety, and personal service. In all cases, we selected the best available. All hotels are clean, comfortable, and have private bathrooms and western-style toilets. But please be aware that accommodations may be different to what you are used to in developed countries.



What about clothes and valuables?

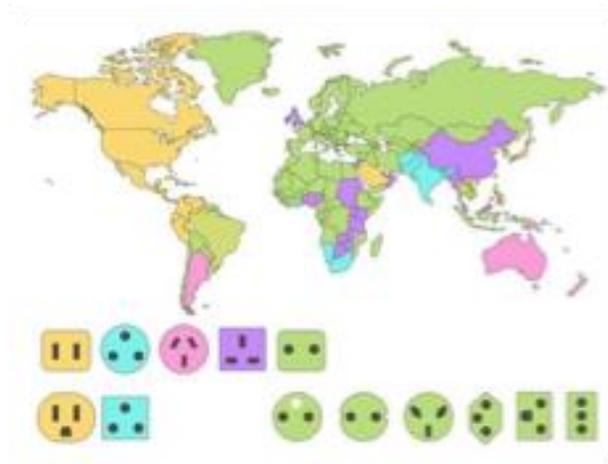
A comprehensive packing list will be supplied. Consider layering clothes. Pack a light windbreaker and fleece hoodie, as well as warm socks and a shawl. Comfortable closed-toed walking shoes or sneakers are recommended, especially for archeological sites. Mexico is a conservative country and women travellers might feel more comfortable with dresses below the knees, and trousers, tops/dresses with some sleeve. Steer away from strappy tank tops and low-cut shirts. Wear a longer shirt if wearing pants.

It's best to leave expensive jewelry and valuables at home.

What is the voltage in Mexico?

The voltage in Mexico is 110-120 volts and the

frequency is 60 Hz with either 2- or 3-pin flat plugs (yellow in the picture below). The primary outlet in Mexico is the 2-flat-pin plug. We recommend packing an international adapter so you can switch back and forth as needed



Where to fly in and out of? What are the best international flight options?

Our tour starts in Mexico City and ends in Villahermosa (VSA) or Carlos Rovirosa Pérez International Airport, an international airport serving Villahermosa, the capital of the Mexican state of Tabasco.

How you get there depends on from where you will travel. Do give yourself ample time to settle in after your long flight.

We'd be happy to advise on individual options. Please contact shila@eyhotours.com

How can I stay in touch with home? Can I get a local SIM card?

Most hotels have fairly decent wifi. In addition, you may wish to supplement wifi with a Mexico SIM card. The main network is the leader, Telcel. You can also get an AT&T Mexico SIM card or use the company Movistar, which is the last preference as calls are frequently dropped.

SIM cards can be purchased for around \$10-15 in the agencies of the network operators and their sales outlets. Be prepared to show your passport.

My big fear is getting sick in Mexico.

* see below for Covid requirement

The main reasons why travelers get sick in Mexico is eating unwisely. Safe bottled water is readily available all over Morocco. The food in Morocco is delicious and generally well prepared. **Only eat foods that have been cooked, and are piping hot upon serving, and eat fruit that can be peeled**. The prices of meals on your own will range from \$3 - \$15, without alcohol.

Don't use ice cubes in drinks. Brush teeth with bottled water until your system is well adjusted to local micro-organisms.

Will drinking water be provided while travelling?

We provide bottled drinking water while on the road. In interests of reducing plastic waste, please consider bringing your own refillable water bottle. Hotels will supply bottled water.

What about the currency?

The Mexican Peso (MX\$ or MN) is the currency of Mexico.

One hundred *centavos* are in one Mexican peso (denoted as MX\$ or MN). Notes come in denominations of 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1000 MX\$. Coins come in denominations of 5-50 *centavo* pieces, and 1-10MX\$, although it's rare to use anything under 50 *centavos*.

USD are accepted in some parts of the country, though it's almost always more advantageous

(less expensive) to pay with Mexican Pesos.

Change money at major airports, or banks in town (HSBC, Scotiabanks in Mexico City, and exchange bureaus & ATMs in major cities). Travellers cheques are generally not accepted in Mexico.

ATMS that accept international cards are widely available in larger cities. It's usually better to withdraw large sums at one go than multiple smaller sums. Many businesses will accept debit and credit cards, for which the foreign exchange charge is usually 4% of the transaction value.

Note: Makers (weavers, carvers etc.) and market vendors almost never have credit card facilities, so purchases need to be paid for in cash.

What about tipping?

Porters and hotel staff tipping is included. We run a \$150 tipping kitty for drivers and guides. You may supplement if you wish. Any unused amounts at the end will be democratically disposed of.

And shopping . . . ?

Markets and artisan workshops are the central hubs of most places we will visit. There, you can find all the clothes, jewelry and dishware you could ever want. Chiapas is most famous for (a) textiles and (b) its pottery. Do be sure to obtain a receipt for larger purchases, as it may be requested either on domestic flights or upon international departure.

Regarding bargaining, we suggest paying makers the price they ask with little or no haggling. In markets, where work is being resold by intermediaries, it is possible to bargain.

Do I need any vaccinations? * see below for Covid requirement

There are no vaccinations required for entry to Mexico but short-term travellers are recommended to receive vaccination cover for **Tetanus, Typhoid** (food and water-borne) and **Hepatitis A** (food & water borne)

Follow the recommendations of your travel health clinic. You may want to bring Tylenol, Immodium and/or Pepto Bismol, in addition to prescription medications.



How do I navigate cultural sensibilities in Mexico? Especially for the Day of the Dead?

Most Mexican families are happy to share their traditions with visitors. We will visit people's homes and cemeteries. Photographs should not be taken until permission has been granted.

When entering churches and cathedrals, visitors are expected to show respect. Women should not wear shorts or skimpy suntops; it is not necessary to cover the head. Hats should be removed by men and women. Some churches forbid photography, and this rule should be obeyed.

Great! How do I sign up?

We'd be delighted to welcome you on board. Please [contact](#) us.

An assessment of Covid provisions follows.

Covid and Mexico

Mexico remains open to travelers. There is no need to provide a negative PCR test or quarantine on arrival, though most resorts ask guests to fill out health questionnaires. There are health screenings at airports. Travelers to the country must complete [a health declaration form](#) and scan the QR code it generates on arrival.

Upon return home, travelers are subject to rules of their countries of residence. Results for PCR and antigen tests are reliably available within 24 hours in Mexico.

The situation and government guidelines change from month to month, so we have no possibility to predict exactly what may happen in October. Mexico has a [four-tier traffic light system](#) of restrictions, with red signifying maximum restrictions, orange limiting capacity in public spaces and at work to 30%, yellow allowing for all work to resume and public gatherings to take place, and green meaning there are no restrictions in place. [See a color-coded map here](#). As of February 18, 2022, no states were red and four states were green. The rest were yellow and orange, with those in orange concentrated in northern and central Mexico.

Here is what we are doing to deliver as safe a tour as possible:

- We require full vaccination of all our travellers
- We require travel medical insurance. Travel repatriation insurance is optional but recommended.
- If you or someone else on our trip has symptoms of Covid 19 while travelling with us, we will assist in testing and medical care if needed.

- We will quickly act to place distance between the unwell traveller and others and follow any government guidelines that are in action at the moment. This may include self-isolation or quarantine depending on the risk to others in the group.
- We will provide access to health facilities such as clinics or hospitals if required.
- All our guides have emergency and contact numbers for the traveller to get the best treatment.
- PCR tests are readily available in all urban areas. For additional peace of mind, you may carry your own Rapid Antigen tests.
- In addition, all guides and drivers are fully vaccinated, with most of them having a third booster.

Please note that E.Y.H.O. Tours is not responsible for covering the cost of any curtailment to the tour, missed transport arrangements, additional accommodation required, all expenses for testing and treatment or any other costs incurred by the traveller/s. Travellers MUST ensure that they have travel insurance that covers these costs.