

UCLA Extension

Landscape Architecture Program

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SACRED LANDSCAPE SITES OF THE MAYA REGION OF MEXICO

A 14-Day Travel Study Tour: August 1 – 14, 2010

A UCLA Extension study tour led by Lollie Ragana, BFA, MA, writer, mythologist, and educator;
and Dr. Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers, Mesoamericanist archaeologist



PRE-TRIP ORIENTATION

**Thursday, February 11
In Westwood Village**

See inside for details.

SACRED LANDSCAPE SITES OF T



Our 14-day summer tour of Mexico's Maya region begins in San Cristobal de las Casas, where students become immersed in the architecture, customs, and food of the contemporary Maya. The tour continues to Palenque, Yaxchilan, and Bonampak, with stunning examples of the Classic Maya Period. Our journey takes us to the Maya ruins of Calakmul, then to Becan and Xpuhil to view the Rio Bec style architecture said to have inspired the Art Deco movement! The trip back follows the Caribbean coast to Tulum, a lovely coastal town. We continue through the Yucatan jungle to other exciting destinations, including Loltun Cave, once considered a sacred portal into the underworld. After a farewell dinner, we leave the enchanting land of the Maya to catch our homeward-bound flights.

DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1 LOS ANGELES TO SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS

Sunday, August 1

We fly from Los Angeles to San Cristobal and, upon arrival, transfer to Hotel Casa Mexicana. Transport from airport to San Cristobal is included. For those arriving early there is an optional Cañon del Sumidero Tour.

3 nights: *Hotel Casa Mexicana*
(dinner on your own)

DAY 2 SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS

Monday, August 2

In the morning we take a guided walking tour of San Cristobal, named in honor of Bartolome de las Casas, a Catholic priest and defender of indigenous communities of Chiapas. San Cristobal was once an important colonial capital that remains the traditional homeland to the Tzeltal and Tzotzil Maya communities. Today, it is known for its colonial architecture, artistic community, and tourist-friendly atmosphere. Our tour includes a visit to the Cathedral of Santo Domingo and Market, as well as the Maya Medicine Museum. Lunch is at the popular El Fuego de Jovel restaurant. After, we visit the historic Museum of Jade and Amber.

(breakfast, lunch)

DAY 3 SAN CRISTOBAL

Tuesday, August 3

Today's excursion is via local shuttle to Chamula and Zinacantan, traditional Tzotzil communities in the Highlands of Chiapas for a visit with members of these ancient communities to learn about their lives, food, and crafts. In Zinacantan we enjoy a lunch prepared with fresh, local food seasoned by traditional herbs and spices and in the style passed down through generations. After lunch we travel to the Na Balom Museum in San Cristobal, the home of well known anthropologists and explorers Franz and Trudy Blom.

(breakfast, lunch)

DAY 4 SAN CRISTOBAL TO PALENQUE

Wednesday, August 4

This morning, we travel by bus to Palenque, stopping off at the Agua Azul waterfalls, a stunning example of Chiapas' natural beauty. Turquoise blue waters flowing over travertine formations appear in a luxurious jungle setting. Besides the breathtaking views, we delight to the sounds of tropical birds, monkeys, and other exotic creatures as we enjoy a picnic-style lunch. Then we continue to the Misol Ha waterfalls for an opportunity to take a refreshing swim! That evening we arrive in Palenque where we overnight at Hotel Villas Kin Ha.

1 night: *Hotel Villas Kin Ha*
(breakfast, lunch)

DAY 5 PALENQUE TO FRONTERA COROZAL

Thursday, August 5

Our day begins with a short drive to Palenque, followed by a guided walking tour of the ruins, one of the best known of the Classic Period Maya sites. Palenque is famous for its stunning architecture and natural setting, as well as for its important role in Maya scholarship as one of the gathering places where major breakthroughs in the decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic script took place. After a picnic-style lunch near the ruins we travel by bus through the Lacandon Maya jungle to the town of Frontera Corozal on the shores of the Usumacinta River where we stay at the Ecolodge Escudo/Jaguar.

2 nights: *Ecolodge Escudo/Jaguar*
(breakfast, lunch)



DAY 6 FRONTERA COROZAL

Friday, August 6

Today's adventure takes us to the Usumacinta River where we experience a gentle, yet thrilling, trip down the Usumacinta River to the Classic Period Maya site of Yaxchilan. Upon our approach, Yaxchilan suddenly emerges from the lush fertility of the jungle. Yaxchilan is well known for its stunning location as well as its impressive, carved lintels and other sculptures. We lunch at the site, enjoying the exotic splendor of Yaxchilan, before journeying to nearby Bonampak, the site of some of the most famous Classic Maya Murals. To complete our day, we return to our hotel in Palenque via a leisurely canoe ride down the Rio Corozal, then by bus, immersed in the verdant jungle that rises along the river's banks.

(breakfast, lunch)

DAY 7 PALENQUE TO CALAKMUL TO XPUHIL

Saturday, August 7

After an early morning, five-hour journey by bus to Campeche, we arrive at Calakmul Biosphere Reserve. Here, we transfer to off-road vehicles for an exhilarating trip to Calakmul, tucked deep within the jungle. Calakmul was one of the largest and most politically important Classic Maya centers, dominating Late Classic Maya history by its rivalry with Tikal. Calakmul is noted for its monumental architecture and majestic jungle setting. After a tour, we travel to Hotel Debliz in Xpuhil where we enjoy a marvelous night of star-gazing through the canopy of trees. Gentle sounds of the jungle add to the tranquility of being deep within nature, much as the Maya experienced it.

1 night: *Hotel Debliz in Xpuhil*
(breakfast)

THE MAYA REGION OF MEXICO



DAY 8 XPUHIL TO BECAN TO BACALAR

Sunday, August 8

This morning we take a short trip to Becan and Xpuhil, both Terminal Classic Maya sites known for their astounding Rio Bec style architecture. We lunch on site, then travel to Rancho Encanto and the Ecolodge Eco Tucan, where we enjoy another night of magnificent views of the sky and calls of the jungle.

1 night: Rancho Encanto and the Ecolodge Eco Tucan (breakfast, lunch)

DAY 9 BACALAR TO TULUM TO PLAYA DEL CARMEN

Monday, August 9

Our day begins with a visit to Tulum, a Postclassic Maya site famed for its breathtaking location at the edge of a cliff overlooking the turquoise waters of the Caribbean. A guided tour enhances our appreciation for the world-renowned examples of later Maya architecture and murals in what is known as the International style. We lunch at a local restaurant before beginning our journey to Playa del Carmen, where we overnight at Hotel Golondrinas (200 m from beach).

2 nights: Hotel Golondrinas (breakfast, lunch)



DAY 10 PLAYA DEL CARMEN

Tuesday, August 10

People travel from around the world to visit Playa del Carmen and its beach resort—and we have the day to spend there at our leisure! There are many alluring options to choose from: a swim in the warm, gentle waves of the Caribbean; a hike along local trails to hear the calls of exotic birds and see the radiant colors and textures of the local flora; a day to journalize or add to your photo album; a chance to relax and sunbathe beneath a dazzling sun set against an azure sky; or a visit with local artisans to learn more about their culture and artistic traditions. Everyone has the chance to purchase crafts that are splendid examples of traditions from Maya times as well as those reflecting contemporary styles in Mexican art.

(breakfast)

DAY 11 PLAYA DEL CARMEN TO COBA TO VALLADOLID

Wednesday, August 11

After relaxing at Playa del Carmen, we travel to Coba, an important Classic Maya city in the Northern Lowlands. Most popular for its system of sacbeob, or white roads, and stunning architecture, Coba is a small but impressive site. Upon arrival, we take a guided tour of the ruins before making the short drive to our hotel in Valladolid for lunch. Then we visit the Dzinup Cenote, a sink hole/cave and famous feature of the karst topography of the Northern Lowlands. The Maya considered these cenotes to be symbolic, sacred entrances to the underworld. We overnight at Hotel Meson del Mar in Valladolid.

1 night: Hotel Meson del Mar in Valladolid (breakfast, lunch)

DAY 12 VALLADOLID TO CHICHEN ITZA TO MERIDA

Thursday, August 12

In the morning we travel to the Early Postclassic Center of Chichen Itza, enticing for its dazzling architecture, an intriguing fusion of Maya and Toltec styles. The largest ballcourt in Mesoamerica is located here, with many temples full of martial and religious imagery. After a guided tour of Chichen Itza we drive to Merida, the capital of the state of Yucatan. After arriving at Hotel Dolores Alba and as the sun begins to set, we take a walking tour, allowing us to relish the rich colonial architecture and history of this charming city.

2 nights: Hotel Dolores Alba (breakfast)

DAY 13 MERIDA TO UXMAL TO LOLTUN TO MERIDA

Friday, August 13

Today, we travel to nearby Uxmal, an excellent example of the Puuc style architecture of the Maya region. After a tour of the ruins of Uxmal, we visit Loltun Cave, an awe-inspiring natural cave which shows evidence of ritual use by the Maya. Like the Dzinup Cenote, Loltun Cave was also treasured as a sacred portal into the underworld. We lunch picnic-style near the site. In the evening, we gather for a farewell dinner in Merida.

(breakfast, lunch)

DAY 14 MERIDA DEPARTURE

Saturday, August 14

This morning we breakfast together before transferring to Merida airport for our return to Los Angeles

(breakfast)

TRIP ENROLLMENT & GENERAL INFORMATION

INSTRUCTORS:

Lollie Ragana, BFA, MA, writer, mythologist, and educator. Ms. Ragana is an instructor of Landscape and the Imagination: Writing about the Landscape and Defining Sacred Sites in Landscape Architecture in the UCLA Extension Landscape Architecture Program.

Claudia García-Des Lauriers, MA, PhD, distinguished lecturer and expert on Mesoamerican Archaeology of the Chiapas region. Dr. García-Des Lauriers is a Research Associate at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA.

GUIDES:

We also employ the services of an excellent local guide who will deal with logistics. Well-informed on historic and touristic aspects of the trip, our guide also serves as technical advisor and coordinator.

STUDY TOUR

SUNDAY, AUGUST 1

TO SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 2010

PRE-TRIP ORIENTATION

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 7-9PM

UCLA Extension Building
1010 Westwood Blvd., Room 416
Westwood Village, Los Angeles 90024-1333

R.S.V.P. to the Landscape Architecture Program at (310) 825-9414 or via email to landscapearchitecture@uclaextension.edu.

The orientation is open to all interested persons. One does not have to be enrolled to attend.

CREDIT (OPTIONAL):

4 units Architecture X 493.84

Credit students are required to submit a special project. Please indicate on the enrollment form if you are taking the course for credit.

ENROLLMENT/EDUCATIONAL FEE:

Reg# V6781 \$595

Early registration is advised, as the size of the tour is limited.

The deadline to register for the class is March 10. Registration after that date is on a space-available basis. This program is designed for interested adults. No one under the age of 18 may enroll without permission. Participants should be in good health. Call (310) 825-9414 for further information.

The UCLA Extension enrollment/education fee reserves space on the trip. It covers costs of planning, administration, and academic personnel; as well as tuition, instruction, and instructional materials. It does not include transportation, meals, accommodations, and other travel program expenses.

TO ENROLL

Online: Visit uclaextension.edu for full information about our courses. Click on "Quick Enroll" and enter Reg# V6781. Complete the enrollment form for secure registration.

Phone: Use American Express, Discover, MasterCard, or VISA. Call (310) 825-9971 or (818) 784-7006.

Arrangements have been made with a tour operator ATC Touroperadores S.A. de C.V to provide a package plan covering internal transport, accommodations, meals (see below for specific meals), and other travel expenses.

REFUND OF THE UCLA EXTENSION ENROLLMENT FEE

A written refund request for the UCLA Extension enrollment fee must be postmarked or phoned in by July 1, 2010. After this date, a refund will be made only in the unlikely event that the trip is cancelled, discontinued, or rescheduled.

TOUR OPERATOR:

The tour operator requires a \$350 deposit by March 1, 2010 to reserve your spot on the tour and payment of remaining balance by June 30, 2010. Please contact Dr. Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers at cgarcia-deslauri@ucla.edu for more information on how to wire your fees to the tour operator.

ATC Tour Operators S.A. de C.V.
Av. 16 de Septiembre No. 16, Centro Histórico
San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, México
Tels. (0052-967) 6782550 / 57 Fax 6783145

Mail: info@atctours.com
atctours.com

LAND TOUR PRICE:

Fourteen Days and thirteen nights: approximately \$2,000. All travel within Mexico is included in the land tour price; airfare and class registration are not included in this price. (Single room supplement: \$400)

PRICE INCLUDES:

Land Transport: Charter bus with 38 reclining seats, air conditioning, a refrigerator, and a music system. The bus will be driven by a professional driver. For our tours of Bonampak and Calakmul, we will use community transport through the jungle roads. For our travel to Chamula and Zinacantan we will use tourist vans, which will also be used to shuttle people to the Merida Airport.

Canoe Travel: Tourist canoes with outboard motors designed for travel on the Grijalva and Usumacinta Rivers. Canoes include cushioned seats.

Lodging: Clean and safe hotels with double beds which can accommodate up to four people or a king-size bed.

Meals: 13 breakfasts and 8 picnic style lunches. For the Yucatan portion, the local guide will provide suggestions for restaurants. Average price per meal is \$11.00 USD. Please note: all dinners are on your own.

Tickets: All tickets to destinations within Mexico are included. Participants are responsible for transporting their luggage to and from the airports, buses, gratuities, etc.

TOUR COST DOES NOT INCLUDE:

UCLA Extension enrollment fee of \$595; round-trip airfare to Mexico; medical immunizations; passport fees; accident/baggage/Cancellation insurance; individual transfers; optional excursions or deviations from the scheduled tour; excess baggage charges; medical expenses; meals not specified in the itinerary; extra dishes and beverages not part of included meals; liquor, soft drinks, or bottled water; gratuities, laundry or valet services; telephone or cable charges; room service; and other items of a purely personal nature. Upon enrollment, your name will be forwarded to the tour operator. They will contact you regarding financial arrangements, their refund policy, and other details.

Note: All rates, quoted in U.S. dollars, are based upon tariffs and exchange rates in effect at the time of this printing. Prices will be adjusted only if conditions or currency exchange rates are revised.

TOUR OPERATOR REFUND AND CANCELATION POLICY

Deposits, and land tour payments will be refunded only if ATC is notified in writing.

Cancellation fees are computed as of the date the written Cancellation notice is received.

The Cancellation policy is as follows:

75% refund of total price if cancellation is 30 days before date of arrival

60% refund of total price if cancellation is 20 days before date of arrival

40% refund of total price if cancellation is 15 days before date of arrival

No refunds are available for cancellations received after July 16, 2010.

Trip Cancellation insurance is available and is highly recommended. You will be sent information with your confirmation.

SPECIAL NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS IN FIELD STUDY TOURS

As a service to students participating in UCLA Extension field study tours that require transportation by air, land, or water, UCLA Extension makes arrangements for such transportation with appropriate commercial agents. However, in so doing, UCLA Extension and the University of California are acting for the convenience of students and assume no liability in connection with any of the tour arrangements other than the obligation to provide instruction and field study guidance, and to grant credit upon satisfactory completion of any credit components of the field study tour, as well as completion of any credit course required to be taken in correlation with the tour. Neither the State of California nor the University of California nor UCLA Extension shall be liable under any circumstances for damages arising out of acts or omissions on the part of the officers, agents, employees, or affiliates of the tour agents.

Note: UCLA Extension and the tour operator reserve the right to modify or change any part of this itinerary. Every effort will be made to follow the program as described, but alterations may occur due to local transportation delays; airline scheduling changes or strikes; bad weather; or other situations beyond our control. Smokers are kindly requested not to smoke on tour buses. Passenger contracts in use by the airlines and public carriers, when issued, shall be the sole contract between the carrier and passenger.

Schedule and costs are current as of January 1, 2010 and are subject to change without notice.

TAX CREDIT

You might be eligible for a tax credit for fees paid at UCLA Extension. For details, see the tax information in the general information section of the quarterly catalog, or visit uclaextension.edu

For further information call the Landscape Architecture Program, Department of the Arts, at (310) 825-9414.

Or write:

UCLA Extension
P.O. Box 24901
Los Angeles, CA 90024-0901
Attn: Landscape Architecture Program