

MEXICO 2024 INFO PACK

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS INFO PACK.

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- About Mexico
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- Detailed Itinerary
- Recommended Packing Checklist
- Travel Insurance & Visa
- Vaccinations & Medical
- Spending Money & Tips
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SETTING EXPECTATIONS

We strongly recommend that you read this info pack in full before signing up. This Mexican adventure is designed by and made for backpackers. We are looking for people with adventurous spirits, those who are up for giving anything a go and really love to throw themselves into new experiences, even when in unfamiliar territory.

This trip will be filled with everything from culture to nature to partying, snorkelling, scuba diving, hiking and eating a whole lot of great food. We are fitting a whole lot of bucket-list experiences into a 13 day itinerary across Mexico so this trip will be fast-paced.

Please note that if you have any concerns regarding your level of fitness, health or ability to complete the trip, it is your responsibility to contact us before embarking on this trip.





ABOUT MEXICO



Mexico, located in the southern part of North America, bordered by the United States to the north and Belize and Guatemala to the south. Mexico is the 11th most populous country in the world with a population of over 120 million people. The official language is Spanish, and the currency is the Mexican Peso. Mexico is known for its rich history, vibrant culture and diverse ecosystems, ranging from deserts and mountains to tropical rainforests and pristine beaches.



When it comes to food, get ready for a tantalizing culinary journey. Mexican cuisine is a true reflection of the country's diversity and heritage. From delicious tacos and enchiladas to flavorful salsas and guacamole, your taste buds are in for a treat. Don't miss the chance to try regional specialties like mole, a rich sauce made with chocolate and chilies, or the refreshing aguas frescas, fruit-infused drinks that provide a perfect respite from the sun.



Culture is deeply ingrained in every aspect of Mexican life. The warmth and hospitality of the Mexican people will make you feel right at home. Prepare yourself for lively fiestas, colorful traditional clothing, and the infectious rhythm of traditional music and dance. On the trip, we'll be exploring ancient archaeological sites like Teotihuacan, and marvel at the architectural wonders left behind by civilizations like the Maya and the Aztecs.





PREPARATION

FITNESS

While we will not be doing any activities that require a specialised level of fitness, the nature of a fast-paced itinerary will feel physically demanding if you are not used to moving around a lot in your day-to-day life.

In fitness preparation for this trip, we recommend aiming to complete at least 10,000 steps per day consistently in the weeks leading up to the trip.

HEALTH

As with everything we do in life, the healthier we are, the better we're going to feel. As you may be trying new foods, experiencing changes to your usual climate and day to day activities, it is well-worth doing what you can to ensure you're in tip-top health with a strengthened immune system ahead of arriving in Mexico.

We recommend taking a multi-vitamin supplement and probiotics daily, as well as keeping well-hydrated, at least a month in advance of the trip. Better still if you also continue this habit for the duration of the trip as well.





PREPARATION

SPANISH

it is not essential that you know Spanish, as the trip will be conducted in English but it is still well-worth getting to know at least the basics of Spanish so you can converse with local vendors. Here's a few words and phrases to get you started!



 **hola**
hello

 **por favor**
please

 **si**
yes

 **no**
no

 **buenos dias**
good morning

 **gracias**
thank you

 **la playa**
the beach

 **baño**
bathroom



 **vino**
wine

 **cervesa**
beer

 **fiesta**
party

 **vamos!**
let's go!

 **agua**
water

 **leche**
milk

 **café**
coffee

 **tengo sed!**
i'm thirsty!



estoy...
i am...

 **azucar**
sugar

 **tengo hambre!**
i'm hungry!

 **cansada/o**
tired

dónde está...?
where is...?

 **tomar**
to drink

 **feliz**
happy

me gustaría...
I would like...

 **comer**
to eat

 **triste**
sad

tienes...?
do you have...?

 **borracha/o**
drunk

quieres...?
do you want...?

 **bailar**
to dance





DETAILED ITINERARY

Please note that though unlikely, this itinerary is subject to change should anything arise that means we cannot do a certain activity.

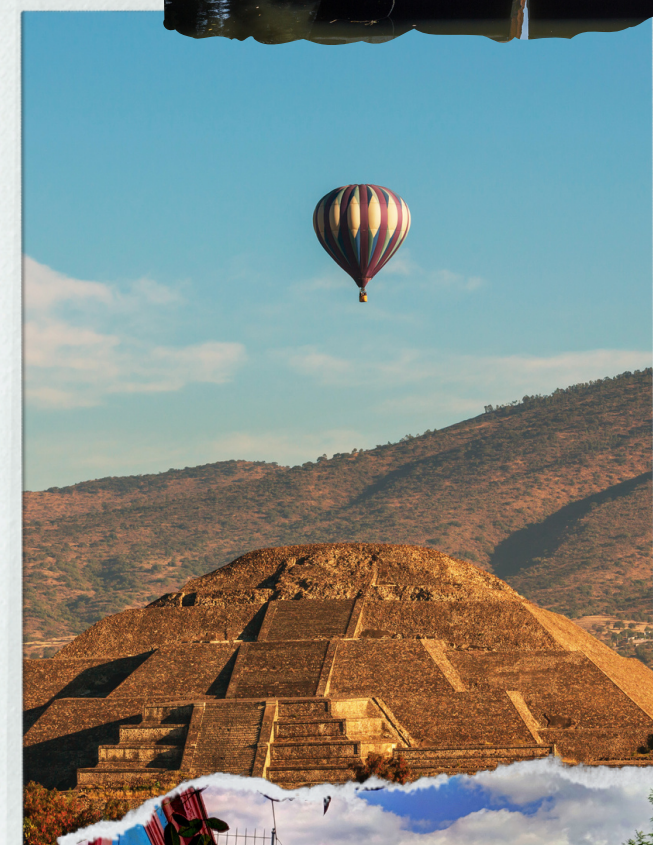
Day 1: You touch down at the vibrant **Mexico City** Airport, your gateway to this adventurous journey. The air is alive with anticipation as you gather with your fellow travelers and head to our Mexico City accommodation. As the sun sets, we'll gather everyone for a hearty traditional Mexican meal, introducing your taste buds to the rich flavors of the country. After we will head back to rest or those who are up for it can join the group for casual evening drinks.

Day 2: After a satisfying breakfast, your adventure begins with a walking tour through the heart of Mexico City. You'll explore historic landmarks, bustling markets, and colorful streets. For lunch, savor the local cuisine at a traditional Mexican eatery. In the afternoon, you set sail on colorful trajineras through the enchanting **Xochimilco** canals. As night falls, the energetic atmosphere continues with a pub crawl, experiencing the city's nightlife.

Day 3: Today, you venture outside Mexico City, visiting the awe-inspiring **Teotihuacan** pyramids. After exploring the ancient ruins, you will have lunch and we journey onwards to the charming city of **Puebla**, where you'll get checked in ahead of evening dinner, drinks and the classic **Lucha Libre** Mexican wrestling experience. Lucha Libre is a type of professional wrestling originating in Mexico, in which the contestants wear masks and use rapid, acrobatic techniques.

Day 4: Morning in Puebla begins with a hearty breakfast before you head on to explore one of the most culturally rich cities in Mexico, **Oaxaca**. Once settled in, explore the cute streets, bustling markets and vendors selling local crafts and wares. We'll catch up on our karaoke skills in the evening before heading out to a local club! (optional)

Day 5: Today, after filling up for breakfast we head out to explore **Hierve El Agua** to see petrified waterfalls and crystalline waters. After exploring the terrestrial-like landscapes, we will have a traditional lunch to line our stomachs because we are about to embark on a journey of learning how Mezcal is made. A local speciality, you'll understand the process of the time honored tradition all while tasting the delights along the way. Enjoy an evening meal in Oaxaca and free time to check out the city a little more.





DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 6: An early start sees you journey by bus to the picturesque **San Cristobal de las Casas** with breakfast along the way. Upon arrival, you enjoy a delicious meal, get refreshed and then participate in a lively pub crawl, experiencing the local alleys of bars that spread through the cities central street. Try the local Mezcal, Mexican wines and much more!

Day 7: Kickstart your day with a hearty breakfast before embarking on an adventurous horseback riding experience in the **Chamula Highlands**, here will take a visit to Iglesia San Juan, a rather unusual church where animal sacrifice still happens today. After a satisfying lunch, you'll explore local markets and immerse yourself in the indigenous culture before riding back to San Cristobal for an evening meal. The evening offers a chance to relax and reflect.

Day 8: Today, you bid farewell to San Cristobal and journey to the archaeological marvel of **Palenque**, one of the most outstanding Classic period sites of the Maya area, known for its exceptional and well conserved architectural and sculptural remains. After checking in and enjoying a delightful lunch, you have a relaxing evening, shrouded in lush jungle before gathering together for the evening meal.

Day 9: Fuel up with breakfast before departing for **Calakmul**. Upon arrival, we sit for lunch before you set off on an exhilarating jungle trek adventure, surrounded by pristine nature. As the sun sets, we settle in the heart of the sub-perennial rainforest awaits you as we camp for the night for dinner!





DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 10: After breakfast, you make your way to the coastal town of **Mahahual**. You embark on an exciting snorkeling adventure to discover the underwater wonders of the Caribbean in one of the most stuffing reefs in Latin America. The evening brings a lively beach party with local DJ's, where you can dance the night away under the stars.

Day 11: Your aquatic adventures continue with a day of diving, exploring vibrant coral reefs and exotic marine life shortly after a light breakfast. Those with an open water dive licence can have up to 2 Tanks for their dive. If you have never dived before, that is no worries at all, you can do a try dive where they will show you the basics and bring you on a short orientation of the nearby reef. This is all included! And if you are not keen on diving, not to worry, we will have someone stay ashore with you to snorkel or enjoy your own free time. After a hearty lunch, you can enjoy the serene calm of Mahahual, roam the market stands or top up your tan at the beach!

Day 12: You head to **Playa del Carmen**, stopping at the stunning cenotes around the **Tulum** area for a refreshing swim. After a delicious lunch in Tulum, you snorkel even more Cenotes, which are world famous for being one of the largest subterranean structures in the world, known for its spooky crystal-clear waters in cave-like structures. We finish off the day with an evening meal in Playa Del Carmen and have our goodbye party to wrap up our trip in style.

Day 13: Your epic adventure concludes as you depart from **Cancun**, reflecting on the incredible experiences and memories made during your journey through Mexico. Whether it's the vibrant streets of Mexico City, the ancient ruins of Teotihuacan, the cultural gems of Puebla, or the natural wonders of the Yucatan Peninsula, you leave with a deeper appreciation for Mexico's diverse and adventurous spirit. Our team will ensure you are transferred to the airport well in time for your departure flight. Of course, if you are extending your stay in Mexico, our team will give you a list of stuff for your onwards journey!





RECOMMENDED PACKING CHECKLIST

This is packing guide not a compulsory list but we strongly recommend you base your packing on these recommendations.

YOUR LUGGAGE

MAIN BACKPACK

A backpack is recommended as your main luggage. Around 35L-60L should suffice. You will not be walking long distances with this bag - it stays in the accommodation or in a secure place whilst we are parted from this luggage. A wheeled suitcase is also okay but do make sure you can comfortably carry it yourself up several flights of stairs.

BUM BAG/FANNY PACK

There are some things which are just nice to have on you at all times, be that travelling through the airport, walking around cities or going out to a cafe. These are those everyday essentials you have to triple check that you have before you leave the house!

- Phone
- Wallet. Most establishments in Mexico are cash-only but it is also sometimes possible to pay with card so a wallet that has the capacity to hold cards, notes and coins is ideal. We recommend bringing the equivalent of at least \$400 as food and spending money for this trip. You can bring this prior in cash and exchange for Mexican Pesos when you arrive or you can get cash directly out of the ATMs here in Mexico. We recommend bringing more than one bank card.
- Passport. Make sure it is has at least 6 months before the expiry date.

DAY BAG

A foldable backpack or tote bag is nice to have with you. For the times you want to carry around more than just the essentials.





RECOMMENDED PACKING CHECKLIST CLOTHING/ACCESSORIES

ESSENTIALS

- **Sport shoes.** A closed-toe shoe that you can comfortably walk around and do activities in for several hours. You will be jungle trekking and horse-riding in these shoes. All the better if they are waterproof in case we get some wet weather.
- **Sandals** With the warm mexican weather, this is probably what you will wear on your feet most of the time so make sure they are super comfy for you to walk in. Also preferably waterproof so they will not get ruined on the beach.
- **Socks.** At least two pairs, suitably paired with your closed-toe shoes.
- **Underwear.** We recommend you bring enough so you are comfortable at all times. Synthetic rather than cotton underwear is advisable. There will be access to washing machines at certain points on the trip but you may also hand wash items and hang dry if need be.
- **Lightweight bottoms.** At least 3-4 pairs of trousers, shorts, skirts. Linen or similar materials are perfect and will take you from day into evening. Block colours are best for mixing&matching with different tops.
- **Lightweight tops.** At least 4-5 tops. Crop-tops, tank tops, t-shirts are all appropriate in Mexico. Again, block colours are best for mixing&matching with different bottoms.
- **Light-midweight jacket.** With the warm mexican weather, you will not need this most of the time but you will be glad of a denim, fleece or other jacket for chillier evenings and for your long journeys. Consider bringing two and layering when need-be.
- **Waterproof jacket.** Good quality is essential as the simply water 'resistant' clothing will let you down in a downpour. Should be big enough to fit over your biggest layer.
- **Sun hat.** Wide brimmed is great but a simple cap will also do the job.
- **Sunglasses.** Polarised are strongly advised.
- **Pyjamas.** Short or long is fine.
- **Swimwear.** At least 1 piece (bikini/cozzy/trunks) but preferably a few more options. Suitable for water activities and swimming in public.

NON-ESSENTIALS *(but nice to have)*

- **Dresses/playsuits/jeans.** If you have room in your case, why not pack some of your fave wardrobe items for the evenings to mix things up a bit
- **Eye mask & Ear plugs.** If it helps you sleep, it is worth bringing!





RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

MISCELLANEOUS

ESSENTIALS

- Bath towel We recommend a microfibre towel as they are quick drying and pack the best
- Leisure Towel for the times we go swimming in public! Again we recommend something microfibre.
- Photocopies of your travel insurance, visa and passport. Always handy to have should you need access to the information offline.
- Chargers for your electronics
- Power adaptor – Plug type A is used in Mexico (same as USA & Canada)
- Power bank to keep your phone etc charged when we are on-the-go
- Re-fillable Water bottle There will be opportunities to fill this up daily. Insulated bottles are great for keeping your water cold throughout the day. Recommended to be at least 1L

NON ESSENTIALS (*but nice to have*)

- Head Torch with spare batteries. Handy for making your way around at night when power is limited.
- Fan. A pocket-sized electric or traditional hand fan can be a really nice thing to carry around when the sun is beating down.
- Dry bag 3-10L Can be nice to bring on boats to keep all your essentials dry
- Camera. If the phone pics just aren't gonna cut it.
- A book and/or writing paper for down time
- Playing cards
- Headphones
- Speaker
- Neck Pillow For the long bus journeys
- Mask&Snorkel We will be providing masks& snorkels at all snorkelling and diving opportunities but we know that if you already have your own, it can be preferable to use your own





RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

TOILETRIES

(ensure you have enough of all of these to last the duration of your trip)

For everyone...

- Suncream at least factor 30.
- Lip balm with SPF
- Insect repellent. Deet based products are best.
- Hand sanitiser.
- Pocket tissues useful for blowing your nose and in the toilet when there's no paper!
- Wet wipes useful for cleaning dirty body parts and after a 'number two'!
- Shower gel or equivalent. Bars of soap are convenient in terms of space but can be difficult to dry out and store whilst on the move.
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Face wash
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant

And for some people...

- Razor
- Contact lenses, Daily disposables are preferable over monthly. Make sure you have your glasses with you too.
- Eye drops
- Skincare items
- Haircare items
- Sanitary items
- Make-up
- Travel wash if you wish to handwash clothing/underwear items along the way





RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT

It's a good idea to carry your own first aid kit to attend to any small medical issues that may arise, none of these things are essential, just nice to have for 'just incase'

For everyone...

- Rehydration salts
- Waterproof plasters
- Blister plasters
- Paracetamol
- Ibuprofen
- Immodium
- Throat lozenges
- Decongestant
- Nasal spray
- Motilium

And for some people...

- Asthma Inhaler
- Nutritional supplements
- Personal medication





TRAVEL INSURANCE & VISAS

Travel Insurance

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient personal travel insurance for this trip. Your policy must provide cover for;

a) medical injury or sickness b) scuba diving (c) helicopter evacuation in an emergency situation, and d) repatriation to country of residence.

You must declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your insurers and ensure you receive written confirmation that any pre-existing medical conditions are fully insured. We advise you to obtain travel insurance as soon as you book, that will cover you for unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury that might result in you not being able to take part in your trip. Please make sure that your policy explicitly covers Mexico.

Tourist Visas

Please check your local government website to ensure you have the appropriate visa for tourism in Mexico. At the time of writing, most countries (including UK, USA and Australia) do NOT require a visa to enter Mexico for tourism but please do check for yourself as this will be your responsibility to obtain should you require any documentation or permissions to travel Mexico.





VACCINATIONS & MEDICAL

Vaccinations & Prophylaxis

We are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health directly. We recommend consulting your GP or The Travel Health Clinic (www.travelhealth.ie) for the most up-to-date medical advice.

Medical

Before departure you will be required to disclose as much detail about your medical history as possible. The information you supply is treated with the strictest confidence. We will do our best to accommodate everyone on this trip, but we do reserve the right to refuse participation if we feel your safety or that of the group may be compromised.





SPENDING MONEY & TIPS

We recommend that you have at least **US \$400** to spend in Mexico on food (lunches & dinners are not included in the trip), drinks and souvenirs.

You can bring this in cash with you and exchange to Mexican Pesos on arrival or you can get Mexican Pesos directly out of an ATM when you arrive. We strongly recommend bringing more than one bank card in the case that any of them do not work in Mexican ATMs. Generally, you should not have any issues with VISA or MASTERCARD.

We also recommend notifying your bank that you will be abroad (specifically in Mexico) and will be using your debit/credit card so they shouldn't block your card with unusual activity.

Some establishments do also take direct card payments but most establishments in Mexico are cash-only so it is essential that you have cash on you at all times.

Tipping is optional in Mexico but it is expected to tip 10-15% if you have received sufficient service as workers rely more on this than their regular wages in the service industries.

We do also suggest a small tip for our Mexican guides at the end of the 13 days.





SPENDING MONEY & TIPS

AVERAGE PRICES TO EXPECT



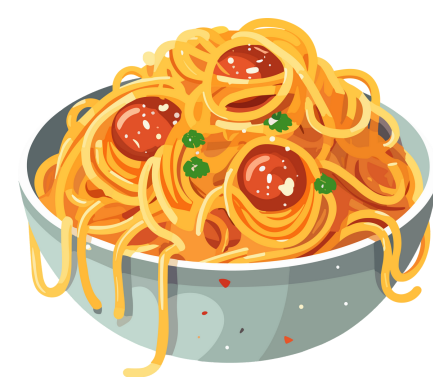
Bottle of water
\$0.5



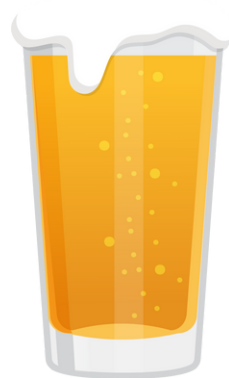
Mexican meal in restaurant
\$5-10



A beer in the shop
\$1



Foreign meal in restaurant
\$10-15



A beer in the bar
\$3



Street food
\$1-5



A cocktail in the bar
\$4-6



20 minute taxi
\$10-15



Glass of wine in the bar
\$6-9





TRIP COST



Trip One

ARRIVE CDMX: Sat 13th April 2024
DEPART CANCUN: Thur 25th April 2024

£1750

£600 deposit required.
Full amount due by 13th March 2024

Trip Two

ARRIVE CANCUN: Sat 27th April 2024
DEPART CDMX: Thur 9th May 2024

£1750

£600 deposit required
Full amount due by 28th March 2024

All prices listed are in GBP. Payments are to be made in GBP.



INCLUSIONS:

- All accommodation for every night of your stay. You will be expected to share rooms and accommodation with other people.
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities
- Airport collection and drop off
- Breakfast each day
- Fluent local guide (Spanish / English)
- Orientation walks and visits
- Guided tour of Teotihuacan
- Guided tour of Palenque ruins site
- Xochimilco Boat Party
- Horse riding excursion
- Pub Crawl in San Cristobal
- Jungle Camp in Calakmul
- Lucha Libre Wrestling in Puebla
- Scuba dive in Mahahual
- Beach Party
- Snorkelling

EXCLUSIONS:

- Lunch & Dinner everyday
- Personal travel insurance
- Flights to and from Mexico
- Tourist visas (if applicable)
- Personal spending and tips
- Expenses of a personal nature like laundry, phone calls, alcohol, excess baggage charges



CANCELLATION POLICY.

Deposits are used to secure your place and will be taken on the backpackingbananas.com store.

These are non-refundable under any circumstances unless in the unlikely event that the trip is to be cancelled or postponed by the organiser. This policy is in line with the tour operator's guidelines, and once your deposit is submitted, it is immediately transferred to the tour operator's ownership.

Remaining payments will be made via Paypal or Bank Transfer (method to be discussed after securing your place) and must be paid by the due dates listed on the previous page.

If you cancel your booking before departure, you must notify us in writing and will incur the following cancellation charges:

PERIOD BEFORE DEPARTURE IN WHICH YOU NOTIFY US	CANCELLATION CHARGE
More than 30 days	Loss of deposit
30 days or less	100% of trip cost





DISCLAIMER

The information in this info pack has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However, it is subject to change and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. In the unexpected event in which there is a drastic change, appropriate amendments will be made to ensure the safety and comfort of guests in these circumstances. There could also be various other changes such as adding an extra meal along the itinerary or altering some of the activities. Ultimately, the goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience and we can guarantee that if any changes do occur, we will do our best to ensure that the trip is fulfilling and in line with your expectations.





I can't wait to meet you!

Christianne and the Ready for Road team x