

Exquisite colonial towns, stunning pre-Columbian sites, colourful folklore, vibrant culture, and delicious cuisine all blend together for the perfect exploration of Mexico.



Guanajuato Cathedral

# Colonial Treasures of Mexico

## TOUR PACE

This comprehensive journey of discovery features relaxed, two-night stays in lively Mexico City and in the colonial gems of Guanajuato, Morelia and Puebla, while comfortable, single-night stays are enjoyed in historical Queretaro and Taxco.

## HOTELS

The hotels in this program play an essential role in experiencing the areas visited. Revel in the luxury of the award-winning JW Marriott in Mexico City. Experience authentic 16th century haciendas in Queretaro and Guanajuato and a former convent in Puebla, renovated in viceroys-era style.

**DAY 1 – ARRIVE MEXICO CITY.** Welcome to Mexico! On arrival at Mexico City International Airport, your airport transfer service takes you to your tour hotel. The remainder of the day is at leisure. Your Tour Director is at the hotel this afternoon to welcome you and answer your questions. Please join us at 7:00pm for a *Welcome Drink* and meet your fellow travellers.  
Hotel: JW Marriott Mexico City Hotel

**DAY 2 – MEXICO CITY SIGHTSEEING.** *Start the day with a visit to the world-renowned National Museum of Anthropology and explore the superb Maya and Aztec exhibits.* One of the highlights of your visit is a *presentation by your Tour Director on the amazing Aztec Calendar, often referred to as the Sun Stone.* Next visit the Historic Centre of Mexico City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After lunch explore Mexico City's imposing central square, the third largest in the world. *The "Zocalo," as it is known colloquially, is flanked by some of the city's most impressive sites including the National Palace, Metropolitan Cathedral and Templo Mayor.* First admire the frescoes and learn about Diego Rivera and the Mexican Muralist Movement at the National Palace. Next visit the Metropolitan Cathedral, the largest church in Latin America. Finally view the Templo Mayor, or Great Pyramid, the most important temple in the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan. Then *enjoy Mexico's world-famous cuisine at a welcome dinner of tasty signature dishes at one of Mexico City's fine restaurants. Enjoy traditional live Mariachis and learn about the history and importance of Mariachis in Mexican culture.* (B,L,HD)

**DAY 3 – MEXICO CITY – QUERETARO.** *Explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Teotihuacan, one of the most famous archaeological sites in Mexico and one of the ancient world's most impressive cities.* Under the expert guidance of your Tour Director, discover a vast complex of monuments, including the Temple of Quetzalcoatl and the Pyramids of the Sun and Moon. Learn of the Teotihuacanos' accomplishments and their far reaching cultural and artistic influence. Then journey to the *UNESCO World Heritage city of Queretaro. A private cocktail reception awaits you in one of the city's oldest and most beautiful colonial mansions; admire the mansion and learn more about this outstanding architectural jewel.* Later enjoy a brief walking tour of this little-visited colonial gem with special attention given to the Historic Monuments Zone and its wealth of outstanding buildings. Later check in for an overnight stay at a sprawling 16th century hacienda.  
Hotel: Hacienda Jurica (B,L,D)

**DAY 4 – QUERETARO – GUANAJUATO.** Arrive in *San Miguel de Allende*, a colonial architectural jewel with beautiful mansions, flower-filled patios, luxuriant gardens and cobblestone streets. The town was declared a *UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008* and is considered one of the loveliest of Mexico's colonial cities. Enjoy a stroll through the city centre under the guidance of your Tour Director to see the famous Parroquia de San Miguel Arcangel and the beautiful Casa de Allende. Wander on your own and browse the many interesting shops; *perhaps visit one of the spectacular private gardens or art galleries the city is famous for, or simply relax in "El Jardin," the central*

*square.* Then continue to the *UNESCO World Heritage city of Guanajuato.* Check-in at your hotel, located on the site of one of Guanajuato's most beautiful haciendas where metals from local mines were once processed. The building has been proclaimed part of a World Heritage Site and is protected by Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History. *Dinner tonight is served at one of Guanajuato's finest restaurants, situated in an old colonial hacienda with glorious gardens. Meet the Chef and learn about tonight's menu and ingredients.* Hotel: Camino Real Guanajuato (B,L,HD)

**DAY 5 – GUANAJUATO SIGHTSEEING.** Set out with your Tour Director on an exploration of this captivating city, built at the centre of the world's leading silver mining area of the 18th century. Guanajuato's history, culture and monuments are as rich as its silver mines were during the colonial era. Explore the winding streets, subterranean passages and lively downtown. View the most interesting sites including the Juarez Theatre, Alley of the Kiss, La Alhondiga - site of the first rebel victory in the War of Independence and Hidalgo Market - designed by famous engineer Gustave Eiffel. *Visit a local mine and learn about Guanajuato's mining industry during the 16th century.* Lunch is served at a lively cafe along the shaded Union Garden. The afternoon is yours to enjoy at your leisure in the city centre, or relax by the hotel swimming pool. This evening, *dinner is served at one of Guanajuato's finest restaurants, followed by an informal presentation and tasting of Mexico's national drink - tequila.* (B,L,HD)

**DAY 6 – GUANAJUATO – MORELIA.** Travelling back in time from the colonial era to Pre-Columbian times, you arrive in the state of Michoacan and the impressive colonial city of Morelia. The exquisite colonial architecture has made the *Historic Centre of Morelia a UNESCO World Heritage Site.* View the beautiful Conservatory of the Roses, Clajivero Palace and Palace of Justice. At the outstanding central square, visit the Cathedral and Government Palace with its beautiful murals. See the 18th Century Aqueduct before checking into the delightful Villa Montana Hotel, designed as a rambling village on a hill with superb views over the historic centre. Enjoy a cocktail at the hotel and the afternoon at leisure. This evening, *your Tour Director offers you a selection of restaurants for your dining pleasure.*  
Hotel: Villa Montana Hotel & Spa (B,L,DA)

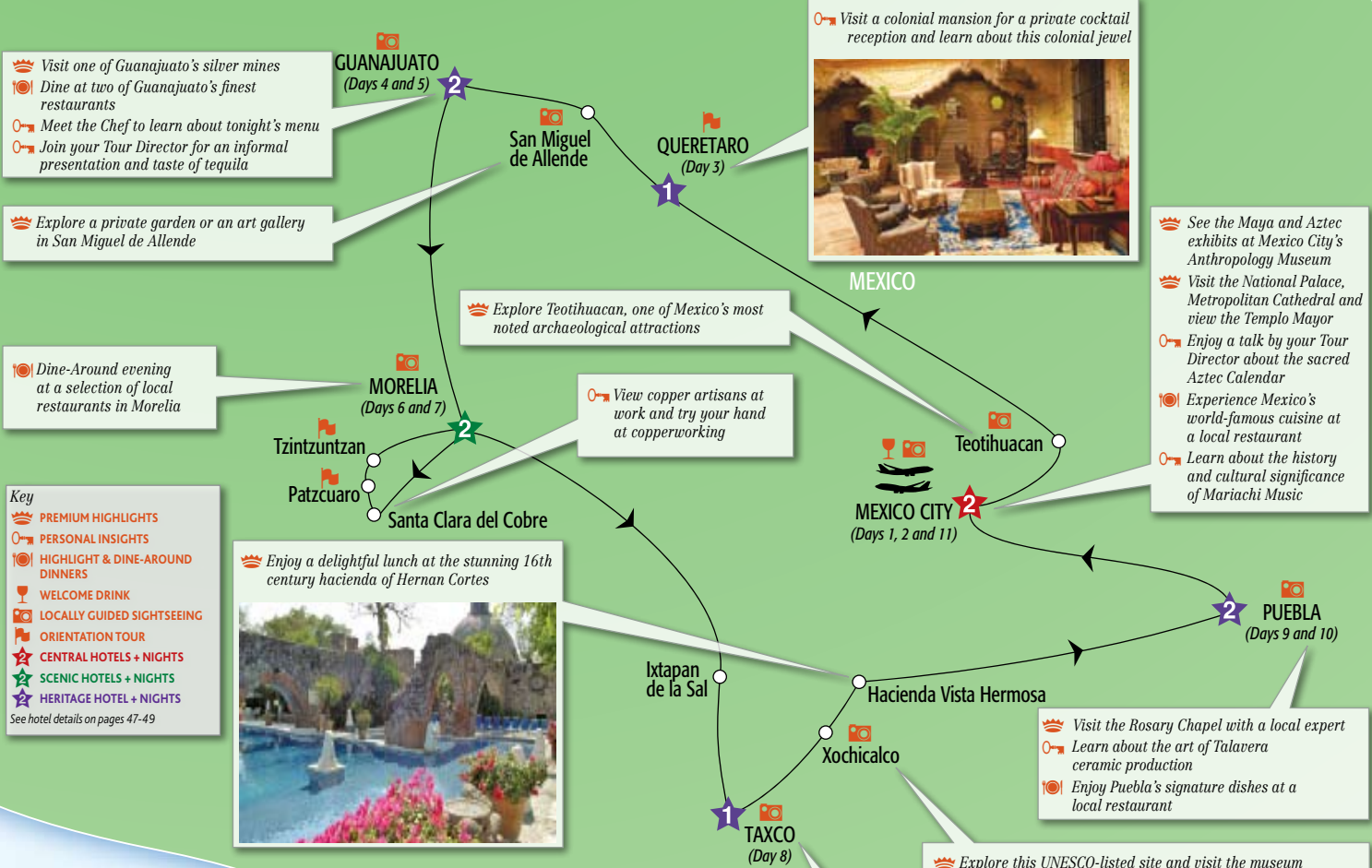
**DAY 7 – PATZCUARO EXCURSION.** Explore the *Purepecha* highlands and discover the subtler aspects of this little-known corner of Mexico. Stop for views of the archaeological site of *Tzintzuntzan* and then stop in Santa Clara del Cobre, where you enjoy an exclusive visit to one of the local copper craft shops. *Observe local artisans at work, learn about the copper-working techniques that produce some of Mexico's most unique and coveted works, and perhaps try your hand at copperworking!* Next visit the small, tranquil colonial village of Patzcuaro, the centre of *Purepechan* culture, situated on the shores of Lake Patzcuaro. Back at the hotel, enjoy the evening at leisure. Relax on the terrace overlooking the city or take a dip in the inviting pool. (B,L)

*Itinerary continues on page 46*



San Miguel de Allende

# 11 DAYS ~ MEXICO



**Key**

- PREMIUM HIGHLIGHTS
- PERSONAL INSIGHTS
- HIGHLIGHT & DINE-AROUND DINNERS
- WELCOME DRINK
- LOCALLY GUIDED SIGHTSEEING
- ORIENTATION TOUR
- CENTRAL HOTELS + NIGHTS
- SCENIC HOTELS + NIGHTS
- HERITAGE HOTEL + NIGHTS

See hotel details on pages 47-49

### Included Premium Highlights

- Visit the National Museum of Anthropology and its superb Maya and Aztec collections
- Visit the National Palace, Metropolitan Cathedral and view the Templo Mayor
- Explore the UNESCO-listed Pre-Hispanic and holy city of Teotihuacan
- Visit one of San Miguel de Allende's most beautiful private gardens or art galleries
- Visit one of Guanajuato's richest silver producing mines of the colonial era
- Discover the UNESCO-listed site of Xochicalco and visit the museum
- Visit Hernan Cortes' spectacular hacienda and enjoy lunch on the beautiful grounds
- Visit the outstanding Rosary Chapel, one of Mexico's most elaborately decorated chapels

### Included Personal Insights

- Find out about the amazing sacred Aztec Calendar and its use to the Aztec people
- Enjoy Mariachi bands and learn about their history and significance to Mexican culture
- Enjoy a cocktail at Casa de la Marquesa in Queretaro and learn about this colonial jewel
- Meet a Chef in Guanajuato and learn about cooking techniques and ingredients
- Learn all about tequila, Mexico's national drink, and enjoy tequila tasting
- View copper artisans at work in Santa Clara del Cobre and try your hand at copperworking
- Enjoy silversmith demonstrations in Taxco and learn about the silver-making process
- Learn about the unique art of Talavera ceramic production on a guided workshop tour

### Included Other Excursions & Sights

- Discover the UNESCO World Heritage Historic Monuments Zone of Queretaro
- Stroll with your Tour Director through San Miguel de Allende, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Walk through the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Guanajuato with your Tour Director
- Explore UNESCO-listed Morelia and view the beautiful 18th century, 253 arches Aqueduct
- Tour Purepecha country; view the archaeological site of Tzintzuntzan and visit Patzcuaro
- Stroll the main plaza in Ixtapan de la Sal
- Explore Taxco, a National Monument and world-class silver jewellery centre
- Discover Puebla's Historic Centre on foot and navigate its neighbourhoods by coach

### Included First Class Services

- Escorted by a professional Tour Director
- Luxury air-conditioned 40 seat coach with extended legroom and onboard restroom
- Insight Hotels include all service charges, taxes and portorage
- Insight Traveller document wallet, map book journal and information pack
- Airport arrival and departure transfers on the first and last day of your tour
- Meet and Greet Service on arrival at Mexico City International Airport.

### Included Quality Dining

- 4 Highlight Dinners of local cuisine in Mexico City, Guanajuato and Puebla (HD)
- Choose from a selection restaurants on your Dine-Around evening in Morelia (DA)
- 10 Full Breakfasts (B), 9 Lunches (L) and 3 three-course table d'hote Dinners or Buffets (D)

Enjoy a silversmith demonstration and learn about Taxco's silver trade



**TOUR CODE:** ACMX **Save up to US\$233 p.p. with our Early Payment Discount**

Starts	Ends	Twin Share p.p.	Single Supp. Option	Starts	Ends	Twin Share p.p.	Single Supp. Option	Starts	Ends	Twin Share p.p.	Single Supp. Option
Mexico City - Mexico City	Mexico City - Mexico City			Mexico City - Mexico City	Mexico City - Mexico City			Mexico City - Mexico City	Mexico City - Mexico City		
* Oct 02 - Oct 12		\$2199	\$940	* Mar 12 - Mar 22		\$2299	\$940	Nov 05 - Nov 15		\$2299	\$940
* Nov 06 - Nov 16		\$2199	\$940	Apr 09 - Apr 19		\$2299	\$940	<b>2012</b>			
				Jun 25 - Jul 05		\$2299	\$940	Feb 11 - Feb 21		\$2350	\$940
* Jan 29 - Feb 08		\$2325	\$940	Jul 16 - Jul 26		\$2299	\$940	Mar 17 - Mar 27		\$2350	\$940
* Feb 12 - Feb 22		\$2325	\$940	Aug 27 - Sep 06		\$2299	\$940				

**Supplements**

**Pre & post tour accommodation**

Per person, per night	Twin	Single	Triple
JW Marriott Mexico City Hotel			
Mon - Thu	\$229	\$399	\$152
Fri - Sun	\$136	\$272	\$91

Accommodation prices are per person, per night, room & taxes only. Airport transfers are not included with pre and post tour accommodation – see page 50 for details.

**Reductions**

SAVE \$100 per person with Triple room reduction

**Insight's Great Savings & Discounts**

SAVE \$233 per person with Young Traveller Discount (5-12 years only)

SAVE up to \$115 per person with 2nd Tour Discount

SAVE up to \$115 per person with Frequent Traveller Discount

Early Payment Discount	12 months	10 months	6 months
SAVE per person	\$233	\$174	\$116

For additional information regarding Insight's Great Savings and Discounts, please see page 50.

**Notes**

All prices are per person sharing a twin room.

All tours start on Saturday and end on Tuesday.

Room Mate Matching is not available.

\*Tours operate as per 2010 brochure.

**DEF** **Definite Departures (DEF)** are tour dates guaranteed to operate. These are regularly updated and listed on our website [www.insightvacations.com](http://www.insightvacations.com) (see page 50 for details).

**Included** are worth approximately \$589

For news, views & info visit our 'Bulletin Board' at [www.insightvacations.com](http://www.insightvacations.com)



Teotihuacan



Mariachi Band



Sample some Mexican food



Puebla

**📷 🗝️ DAY 8 – MORELIA – TAXCO.** Heading for the legendary silver mining town of Taxco, cross into the state of Mexico and stop in the delightful whitewashed village of *Ixtapan de la Sal*. Back on the road, enter the state of Guerrero and drop down into the perennial spring time climate of *Taxco*, one of Mexico's most beloved colonial towns. From the hotel, marvel at the impossibly situated village, wedged into the mountain which was home to the very first and largest Spanish silver mine in the Americas. This boom and bust town has been declared a National Monument to preserve the original character displayed in the cobblestone streets, red tiled roofs and white adobe buildings. Explore the winding streets lined with cafes and shops, the Plaza Borda (central square) with its ornate church - the Parroquia de Santa Prisca, and Casa Borda. *Taxco* is famous for its hundreds of silver workshops and has become the most *prolific silver jewelry center* in all of Mexico. *Visit one of the renowned silver shops and learn about the silver making process before time on your own to explore the city and to browse Mexico's finest display of silver craftsmanship.* Dinner is at the hotel this evening with superb views of the colourful city center. Hotel: Posada de la Mision (B,L,D)

**📷 🏰 DAY 9 – TAXCO – PUEBLA.** Rise early for breakfast before setting out to one of Mexico's most important and exceptionally well-preserved archaeological sites - Xochicalco. *A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Xochicalco's ritual centers, temples and plazas cover almost 2500 acres. Xochicalco was a meeting place for a wide variety of cultures including Toltec, Olmec, Zapotec, Mixtec and Aztec. After a visit to the interesting museum, explore the site and view the marvelous Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent.* Next find yourself transported back in time to the era of the Spanish conquistadors at *the stunning 16th century hacienda of Hernan Cortes, conqueror of Mexico. Wander the majestic buildings and luxuriant grounds before enjoying a delightful lunch in this well-protected refuge.* Later journey to *Puebla* and check in at your remarkable hotel, a former convent built in the 16th century in pure Viceroyship-era style for a wealthy religious order. Hotel: Camino Real Puebla (B,L,D)

**📷 🏰 🗝️ 🗺️ DAY 10 – PUEBLA SIGHTSEEING.** Enjoy a brief walking tour of the *Historic Center of Puebla*, a *UNESCO World Heritage Site*, rich in architectural treasures, traditions and cuisine. The *bucolic central square* is impressive with its colonial-style cathedral and host of buildings decorated with the ubiquitous azulejos (tiles). *Join a local expert for a privately guided visit to the Iglesia de Santo Domingo. Admire its outstanding Rosary Chapel, one of the most elaborately decorated chapels in Mexico, and a masterpiece of Mexican Baroque with dazzling use of gold-leaf stucco and onyx stonework.* Then, board your motorcoach and navigate the most interesting neighborhoods. Stop at one of the finest Talavera ceramic workshops in the city. *Learn the age-old tradition of Talavera craftsmanship that has evolved from Pre- Columbian roots and assimilated techniques, materials and processes from Spain and the modern era.* After lunch, set off to wander the city's picturesque streets on your own. Perhaps visit a museum, explore the shops, join a Mexican cooking lesson or relax at a sidewalk cafe and soak in the atmosphere. Discover why Puebla is considered Mexico's gastronomic capital as you *enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant featuring "Cocina Poblana" - Puebla's signature dishes,*

*including two of the country's most popular recipes: mole and chiles en nogada (seasonal). Meet the Chef and learn about the ingredients and techniques involved in tonight's tasty local dishes!* (B,L,D)

**DAY 11 – PUEBLA - MEXICO CITY - DEPARTURE.** This morning, return to Mexico City. En route, stop for the best views of *Cholula's* iconic *Great Pyramid*, the largest stone monument in the world, with a colonial church at its top and the active volcanoes of *Popocatepetl* and *Iztaccihuatl* as its background. Your tour ends at Mexico City International Airport and the hotel in Mexico City for passengers extending their stay. (B)

*Please do not schedule flights before 2:30pm.*

*Please note: In selected locations, the tour requires walking on uneven surfaces and climbing some stairs.*



Taxco