JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

MEXICAN STREET FOOD

10 days from **£2,550pp**

MEXICO / MEXICO CITY / COLONIAL AND SILVER TOWNS / OAXACA



WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

- A passion for the region runs through all we do
- All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America
- Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

- Fully bonded and licensed
- ATOL-protected
- On your side when it matters
- Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

- Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks
- We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions
- Let us show you the Latin America we know and love

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Discover the complexity of flavours and exotic recipes of Mexican street cuisine, from markets to the end product on street stalls on Mexico City, Puebla and Oaxaca and get to know three of Mexico's most evocative cities.

DAY 1	**Transfer to your hotel in Mexico City on the central plaza.**
DAY 2	**Visit the San Juan market; a first taste of local delicacies.**
DAY 3	**Guided excursion to pre-Hispanic Teotihuacán pyramids.**
DAY 4	**Visit a traditional neighbourhood to sample street food.**
DAY 5	**Travel to baroque Puebla, walking tour.**
DAY 6	**Sample local confections and savoury snacks.**
DAY 7	**By road to Oaxaca.**
DAY 8	**A day's cookery course with Oaxacan specialities.**
DAY 9	**Visit neighbourhood markets; guided city tour.**
DAY 10	**Fly to Mexico City; connect to international flight.**

ITINERARY

Mexican food has long been staple fare in the high streets of the UK and the malls of the US. Tasty burritos, enchiladas, tacos and fajitas –just the names are enough to make the mouth water.

But going back to the cuisine's roots in the streets and markets of Mexico, beyond the fast food joints and even the better restaurants outside the country opens the eyes as well as the mouths. There are both subtle and clear differences between the delicacies of different regions, which you'll discover on this unique holiday exploring the inspiration behind some of the most delicious snacks. What's more you'll get to know three of Mexico's most interesting and enticing cities: the capital, Puebla and Oaxaca; there are guided tours in all of them.

In Mexico City you visit San Juan market, which caters not only for the casual shopper but also for some of the country's best known chefs and restaurants, with a huge range of exotic ingredients including crocodile and wild boar. Move on into the streets of the older neighbourhoods to try local delicacies on the stalls lining the streets and markets. Move on to Puebla, home town of many of the most talented chefs, inspired by some extraordinary sweet and salty delicacies. In mountain-based Oaxaca, you'll go shopping with a local cook and learn how to prepare a four course meal featuring the town's delicious gastronomy.

DAY 1

Transfer to your hotel in Mexico City on the central plaza.



The city is mind-bogglingly huge. Seen from the air, Mexico City, embracing over 20 million people, is a drained lake full of urban sprawl, located at 2,250m.

But at ground level it exposes all the different aspects of its centuries of history dating back to the Aztecs: the secretive lanes around the city's heart, the vast zócalo, dominated by its monumental cathedral; the arty colonial quarter of Coyoacán; the silvery sky-scrapers lining the noble Paseo Reforma – inspired by the Champs Elysées – to shady Chapultepec Park.

DAY 2

Visit the San Juan market; a first taste of local delicacies.



You will dive into the vibrant market scene offered by one of the best known markets in Mexico City. San Juan is the number one spot to seek out exotic products; fruits, vegetables, meats, insects, chilies, moles, corn and cheese. You'll have the chance to sample homemade mole and blue corn tlacoyos; also discover the flavour and texture of pulque, an alcoholic beverage traditional to central Mexico.

This is the ideal experience for true adventurers who want to gain an in-depth understanding of Mexican markets and will enjoy the chaos, grit and charm of some of the oldest neighbourhoods in the city.

DAY 3

Guided excursion to pre-Hispanic Teotihuacán pyramids.



Drive 50km northeast to the archaeological site of Teotihuacán, home to some of the most remarkable relics of ancient civilisation in the world. The immense ruins – dominated by vast pyramids – are thought to date from around 300BC. The identity of the city's founders and where they came from remains a mystery. It was completely abandoned until the Aztecs arrived, eventually collapsing for good in the 7th century AD.

En route you stop at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas (Square of the Three Cultures) in the Tlatelolco neighbourhood. The plaza recognises three periods of Mexican history reflected by buildings: pre-Columbian, Spanish colonial, and the independent mestizo nation.

Continue to the basilica of Guadalupe, a statue of the Virgin Mary atop a hill where a local Christian convert claimed to have seen her in a vision. Here, pilgrims approach the shrine on their knees across the flagstone courtyard. The most devout make the whole pilgrimage on their knees. Afterwards, return to Mexico City.

DAY 4

Visit a traditional neighbourhood to sample street food.



You will visit an old traditional neighbourhood now packed with office workers, to gain an overview of the complex street food system. Move on from one street food stand to another and sample fresh tamales, squash flower burritos, carnitas, cemitas and more. The experience takes around four hours and is suitable for vegetarians.

DAY 5

Travel to baroque Puebla, walking tour.



Explore Puebla – a Unesco World Heritage Site – on a guided walking tour. The streets are streets lined with baroque churches and colonial mansions, many adorned with the beautiful hand-painted Talavera tiles for which the city is famous.

This is also the place where Mexico's national dish – the 'mole poblano' – originated. Visit the Cathedral – the second largest in Mexico; Mercado El Parian – a crafts market in the artists' quarter; Templo de San Francisco – where the body of San Sebastian de Aparicio lies, a Spaniard who came to Mexico in 1533 and planned many of the country's roads before becoming a monk.

DAY 6

Sample local confections and savoury snacks.



In addition to having the most churches of any Mexican city Puebla is purported to have the most chefs and also some of the best. Many have honed their culinary skills working in Puebla's markets, cafes and street stalls.

This is where you'll be introduced to a world of colourful sweet and savoury delights with wonderful local names: camotes are fruit-flavored sweet potato cigars, borrachitos tequila-infused gum drops, tortitas de Santa Clara (shortbread-like rounds iced with a pepita glaze). quesadillas with pumpkin flowers and wild mushrooms make a great savory vegetarian snack whilst meat eaters can tuck into mixiotes de carnero (lamb in parchment), and chiles en nogada (pork and fruit stuffed peppers in walnut sauce).

DAY 7

By road to Oaxaca.



Oaxaca, with its airy patios and graceful arcades, is famed for its colourful market, serapes, crafts and dances. The city's historical centre, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987.

Separated from Mexico City to the north by rugged mountains and dotted with small weaving and craft villages, the isolated region has ploughed its own furrow, forging its own distinctive identity.

Known as Mexico's artistic centre, Oaxaca embodies both indigenous and colonial features, the markets, artisan workshops, rituals and multiple fiestas reflecting the native culture while the baroque architecture, plazas and museums bear witness to the Spanish influence.

DAY 8

A day's cookery course with Oaxacan specialities.



Oaxacan cuisine is famous for its complexity and rich variety of ingredients and flavours. You will learn how to prepare traditional Oaxacan dishes from a local cookery teacher using recipes passed down through the generations.

First, you will visit the local market to buy and sample the ingredients; fruits, vegetables and regional herbs and spices. Following a short talk on Oaxacan cuisine, you'll head into the kitchen to prepare and then enjoy eating a delicious four course meal.

DAY 9

Visit neighbourhood markets; guided city tour.



In the morning there's a comprehensive visit to Benito Juárez market and its environs: this is the focus of street food in the city. You'll be taken to various parts of the city for different courses in what will be an exotic, locally inspired meal. If you dare, you'll have the opportunity to taste well known the pre-Hispanic delicacy grasshoppers (chapulines), and the less controversial quesillo cheese; as well as an empanada, washed down with fruity water.

Afterwards, walk to the 20th November market to continue sampling the delicious gastronomy of Oaxaca, tasting grilled dry meat (tasajo) with guacamole and baby onions. For dessert choose a traditional sweet, an Oaxaca sherbet or a classic nicuatole. .Finally, visit a *mezcaleria* to sample the different varieties of the powerful Mexican liquor which is distilled from a bright blue cactus-like plant cultivated locally.

DAY 10

Fly to Mexico City; connect to international flight.

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

- Mexico City: Guided excursion to Teotihuacan pyramids and the Guadeloupe shrine
- Mexico City: Street food tour
- Puebla: Walking city tour and street food experience
- Oaxaca: Food market and cookery class
- Oaxaca: Guided street food tour with mezcal tasting

ESSENTIALS

2 scenic road journeys by public coach..

This trip combines mid-range hotels, colonial or modern in style with well-equipped rooms, private bathroom and heating/air-conditioning.

Breakfast daily; lunch days 2,4,6,8,9.

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 30 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by clients on their return.

10 days, 9 nights: Mexico City 4; Puebla 2; Oaxaca 3.

The unit of currency in Mexico is the Mexican peso.

Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds. We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money.

It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around US$50 per person per day should cover the cost of meals not included in the holiday itinerary, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay considerably more.

Tips are welcomed and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income. Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

Tipping guidelines can be found in our Briefing Dossier.

Travel insurance is essential. Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket.

VISAS

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying to the US, or via the US you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

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Generally this food and drink-focused holiday is suitable for visitors with an interest in Mexico and its culinary traditions. If you have a disability, please contact us.

In Mexico City and the mountains towns the climate is temperate all year round and, because of the altitude, it rarely gets too hot.

The wet/rainy season lasts through June to August, which usually means a couple of hours of rain in the afternoon.

Temperatures can drop to freezing in Mexico City and Oaxaca over the winter months.

For day-to-day wear you should go prepared to encounter all seasons – a light fleece jacket and a waterproof/breathable outer shell makes a good combination. Trousers, skirt or shorts made from light, quick-drying synthetic materials work well. If you plan to eat in smart restaurants, although clothing is not formal (no need for jacket and tie), something quite smart would be appropriate.

Strong, comfortable footwear is essential and you should bring insect repellant, sun block and sun glasses.

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following; typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. For specific requirements you must consult your GP.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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