

PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

MEXICO'S COPPER CANYON RAILWAY

10 days from **£3,300pp**

MEXICO / MEXICO CITY / THE COPPER CANYON



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

This unique holiday travels the most scenic stretch of the Copper Canyon Railway, the famous train ride along the rim and through the gorges of northern Mexico – bookended with time in Mexico City. You're ideally positioned at the end to continue to the destination of your choice.

DAY 1	**Arrive Mexico City, transfer to hotel in the city centre.**
DAY 2	**Visit Teotihuacan pyramids and Guadeloupe shrine.**
DAY 3	**Fly to Chihuahua in northwest Mexico.**
DAY 4	**Travel to Creel by road and overnight.**
DAY 5	**By train to Posada Barrancas.**
DAY 6	**Optional zipline across the canyon.**
DAY 7	**Continue by rail to El Fuerte**
DAY 8	**At leisure in El Fuerte. Fly from Los Mochis to Mexico City**
DAY 9	**At leisure in Mexico City**
DAY 10	**Transfer to Mexico City airport**

ITINERARY

Welcome to wild country. South of the Rio Grande, Mexico's vast far northern state of Chihuahua unfolds as a land of stone-strewn desert offset by a deep blue sky. Cities and settlements are few and far between, the glitzy state capital of Chihuahua and the occasional Mennonite town connected by a long desert highway, eventually yielding to the craggy mountains and forested gorges inhabited by the Raramuri, the native people of the region.

It's here, deep inside Chihuahua, that the seemingly fathomless Copper Canyon cuts a swathe through the barren desert crust. Seemingly against all the odds, the world-famous Chepe railway traverses this route, with views of some of the continent's most spectacular mountain scenery. There are relentless ravines and gorges, and an infinite variety of landscape and vegetation from snow-dusted peaks smothered in conifers to sub-tropical citrus groves.

This route shows two extremes of Mexico, from little-explored expanses to Latin America's most populous and multi-dimensional capital city. You're ideally positioned at the end to continue to the destination of your choice, whether it's a beeline to the Pacific coast, a colonial gem such as San Miguel Allende or an ancient temple in the Yucatan peninsula.

The Copper Canyon Railway has long been one of Mexico's relatively unsung highlights. Needless to say, railway departure schedules are subject to change, which could result in alterations to the described itinerary. Our expert Travel Consultants will be able to advise you if this is the case at the time of booking. Where possible, we use the more comfortable Chepe Express service.

DAY 1

Arrive Mexico City, transfer to hotel in the city centre.

Transfer to your hotel in the historic centre of the city. Mexico City, known by the local people simply as 'DF' (Distrito Federal), was built on the site of Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec Empire, and it lies at 2,250m above sea level. Vast, chaotic and vibrant, this sprawling megalopolis of more than 20 million people has a multitude of attractions.



DAY 2

Visit Teotihuacan pyramids and Guadeloupe shrine.



Today you'll be driven to the archaeological site at 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.

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.

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DAY 3

Fly to Chihuahua in northwest Mexico.



Fly to Chichuahua in northwest of the country in the afternoon (2.5hrs); overnight here. Now a rather unprepossessing industrial town it does have an interesting historical centre and some grand mansions in the suburbs.

DAY 4

Travel to Creel by road and overnight.



Travel by road to Creel, a journey of about 3.5 hours. The route runs parallel to the track for most of the journey. The scenery features cattle grazing pastures, with long Pampa grass narita azul) and some of the world's largest apple orchards, run by Mennonite communities. Open plains give way to oak forests and limestone as the road climbs to the rim of the canyon. Arrive at the mountain town of Creel where you're now positioned to board the train the following day.

DAY 5

By train to Posada Barrancas.

Board the train, looping out of the canyon onto a pine-wooded sandy plateau. This is the most dramatic stretch of the canyon. You can make a short stop here to gasp at the superlative views from a dizzying lookout point; you'll probably be met by indigenous Tarahumara indians selling hand crafted gifts.



DAY 6

Optional zipline across the canyon.

You might choose an optional adventure to experience the spectacular cable car and or zipline across the Canyon. The cable car is one of the most dramatic in the world, flying over ravines and boulder fields: at several points you are hanging at 450m above ground level. If you are feeling even more adventurous, whizz along seven ziplines and two hanging bridges down into the canyon: the trip takes about 90minutes. It's quite a daunting prospect but there's a guide with you at all times. The most extensive zip line is 1,130m long. From the bottom of the canyon you might take the cable car back up.



DAY 7

Continue by rail to El Fuerte

Get ready for your third day on the tracks. This is the most spectacular section of the whole journey as the train sweeps round bends, crosses cantilever and box-girder bridges, disappears into and re-emerges from tunnels and climbs switchbacks as it snakes its way down the cliff face, eventually arriving in El Fuerte. The day's rail journey is about 5.5hrs.



DAY 8

At leisure in El Fuerte. Fly from Los Mochis to Mexico City

There's time to relax and stroll around the pretty, colonial town of El Fuerte before the drive to Los Mochis airport – about 90 minutes along good paved roads. As you head away from the arid mountains, the latter part of the journey passes working farms and fertile sugar cane and maize fields.

A 2-hour flight takes you back to megalopolis Mexico City where your driver will be waiting to transfer you to your hotel for a further 2-night stay.



DAY 9

At leisure in Mexico City

We can pre-book a range of optional excursions for your final day in Mexico, or feel free to explore independently.

DAY 10

Transfer to Mexico City airport

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

- Teotihuacan and Guadeloupe shrine, Mexico City
- Cable car tour and optional zipline in the Copper Canyon

ESSENTIALS

The jet flight from Mexico City to Chihuahua takes 2.5hrs, 2 train journeys (2hrs and 5.5hrs), airport transfers.

In Mexico City your hotel is well-located in the historic centre. The accommodation on the Copper Canyon route consists of mid-range properties perfectly positioned for hopping on and off the train.

Breakfast daily; dinner day 5; full board day 6.

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 the latter on their return.

10 days, 9 nights: Mexico City 2; Chihuahua 1; Creel 1; Posada Barrancas 2; El Fuerte 1; Mexico City 2

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$40 will cover food, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay more.

TIPPING

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income. We recommend approximately $10 per person for a half day and $20 for a full day for guides and half that for drivers.

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.

INSURANCE

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

AIRPORT TAXES

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

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This holiday is suitable for people of all ages including children. The rail trip does not present problems for people of limited mobility but there are some steps to be negotiated. There is a minimum age for solo ziplining. Young children can be accompanied on the zip by a guide..

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.

In Mexico City and the mountains towns the climate is temperate all year round and, because of the altitude it never gets too hot. Temperatures can drop to freezing in Mexico City over the winter months.

The weather in the canyon varies according to altitude. Evenings can get very cold in the canyon when temperatures drop below zero, especially in Jan-Feb and there may be snow on the rim. The valley floor has a tropical climate.

On average, the warmest months of the year are Jul-Aug, during which time the daytime high temperatures will generally hover around the upper 20°s C and lower 30°s C. The night-time temperatures during these months will drop to the 20°s. From Apr-Sep, the canyons are not only hot, but they also are very humid. The oldest months are Jan-Feb.
The rainy season in the Copper Canyon is from June through September. During this time everything in the canyon is green and lush.

Bring practical, comfortable clothing and a light-weight jumper. If you plan to eat in smart restaurants in Mexico City, although clothing is not formal (no need for jacket and tie), something quite smart would be appropriate.

Strong, comfortable shoes or trainers are advisable and you should bring insect repellant, sun block, sun glasses, and swim wear.

Please get in touch with the JLA office before departure if you have any doubts.

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.

JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA

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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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