



**WAM**

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



**Mexico City & Oaxaca**  
**Ancient Inspirations & Contemporary Art**

with Alejandra Peña-Gutiérrez, Director of the Weisman Art Museum

March 1 – 7, 2024

# Mexico City & Oaxaca

## Ancient Inspirations & Contemporary Art

March 1 – 7, 2024

The ancient civilizations of Mexico, such as the Aztecs, Maya, and Olmecs, left behind a rich legacy of art and culture, which continues to inspire artists today. In two of its most vibrant cities, Mexico City and Oaxaca, join **Alejandra Peña-Gutiérrez**, Director of the Weisman Art Museum, for a behind-the-scenes look at how the use of symbolism, color, materials, and techniques from the ancient world can be seen in many contemporary Mexican artworks. Meet artists and weavers in their private studios, join experts in UNESCO-listed archaeological sites, and savor authentic, delicious dishes in these culinary capitals.

Discover Mexico City, where the echoes of its Aztec past harmonize with the pulse of contemporary life. Explore the city's architectural wonders, where Mexican symbols, colors, and mural traditions come alive in stunning creations. Marvel at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of UNAM, a testament to the genius of renowned architects and muralists. Step into the private homes and studios of celebrated artists and visit influential art galleries. Continue your journey in majestic Oaxaca, an ancient settlement deeply rooted in its Zapotec heritage. Indulge in a delightful lunch hosted by a Zapotec artisan and his family, gaining insight into their rich cultural heritage. Explore the monumental archaeological complex of UNESCO-listed Monte Albán, a testament to over 1,500 years of history and the legacies of the Olmecs, Zapotecs, and Mixtecs. Admire the ruins of palaces, temples, and a ball court, all while enjoying magnificent views of the valley below.

### TRAVELING WITH YOU



**Alejandra Peña-Gutiérrez**, the director of the Weisman Art Museum of the University of Minnesota, has been working for 30 years in the art world. Her career started in Mexico City where she worked at various museums before she became director of the Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes. She was General Deputy Director for Artistic Heritage

at the National Institute of Fine Arts in Mexico before she moved to Puerto Rico to work at the Museo de Arte de Ponce, where she was the director from 2013 to 2021.



Map of the region

### TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Join an after-hours private tour of the Museo Nacional de Antropología, experiencing its vast collection of artifacts from the Aztecs, Maya, Olmecs, and other cultures without the crowds
- Visit the private home of a famous Mexican artist and his fashion-designer wife, a contemporary mix of concrete architecture, unique artworks, mismatched furniture styles, and sculptures by Reyes, creating a harmonious space where the couple lives, works, and creates
- Before opening hours, tour Casa Azul, the home of Frida Kahlo and now a museum dedicated to the life and work of this iconic Mexican artist
- Meet with Mexico City's leading artists in their studios on private visits, learning about their art and seeing their works in progress
- Revel in Mexico City's exciting contemporary art scene by visiting some of the city's most influential art galleries, which features some of the world's most cutting-edge art
- Savor a special tasting session of *mezcal*, the region's famous smoky spirit made from the agave plant
- Be awed by several UNESCO World Heritage Sites including a visit to Oaxaca's archaeological powerhouse, Monte Albán, the capital of the Zapotec civilization between 500 B.C. and 800 A.D.

**NOTE:** Some itinerary details are subject to final confirmation.





Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City

### FRIDAY, MARCH 1: DEPARTURE / ARRIVAL IN MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Depart by air for Mexico City and arrive in the mid-afternoon. Guests who choose the suggested flights will be met at the airport and taken to the hotel by group transport. This evening, enjoy a special after-hours visit to the Museo Nacional de Antropología with comments from Director Alejandra Peña-Gutiérrez and Leonardo López Luján, a leading archaeologist and director of the excavations at Templo Mayor. Explore the museum's 23 halls, each of which is dedicated to a different culture or region of Mexico, and admire masterpieces of Pre-Columbian art, including dazzling finds from the tomb of Pakal, a Maya lord who reigned at the site of Palenque in the seventh century A.D. Then, gather for a welcome dinner at a Mexico City favorite. D

### SATURDAY, MARCH 2: MEXICO CITY

After breakfast, drive to Coyoacán and San Ángel, two charming colonial neighborhoods. Visit the Museo Frida Kahlo, also known as the Casa Azul (Blue House), on a pre-opening private tour. This house was where the artist was born, grew up, and returned to live as her career flourished. Walk along leafy, cobblestone streets lined with former mansions and stop at the colorful Mercado de Coyoacán, one of Mexico City's oldest and largest markets.

Drive to UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), UNESCO-recognized as "an outstanding example of 20th-century modernism inspired by Mexican mural tradition." View the façade of the Central Library, which is decorated with mosaics by Juan O'Gorman and David Siqueiros's mural *The People to the University, the University to the People* on the rectory. While on campus, enjoy lunch together at the University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC) and its restaurant Nube 7, followed by a special tour of the museum's incredible collection. This cultural landmark was

designed by Teodoro González de León and holds the largest public collection of contemporary Mexican art, including painting, photography, and sculpture. Stop at Bazaar Sabado, the popular shopping destination for arts and Mexican handicrafts. Return to the hotel and gather later for dinner at a local favorite (Lorea). B,L,D

### SUNDAY, MARCH 3: MEXICO CITY

Explore the beginnings of Mexican muralism, starting at the Plaza del Templo Mayor in the heart of Mexico City. This vibrant location not only serves as an active archaeological site but also holds the historic remnants of the Great Temple of the Aztecs. As you stroll along, catch a glimpse of the majestic National Palace and behold the mesmerizing murals by Diego Rivera that depict Mexico's enduring struggles and triumphant moments. Amid the Aztec ruins of Templo Mayor, view the Cathedral, an architectural marvel constructed using the very stones from the once-standing Aztec temples.

Gather for a delightful lunch at Lago/Algo, a venue that seamlessly blends contemporary art, stunning architecture, and gastronomic delights. This extraordinary establishment, managed by the renowned art gallery OMR, has breathed new life into a pre-existing modernist building from 1964. From its vantage point overlooking the picturesque Lake Chapultepec, savor a culinary feast that harmoniously complements the artistic ambiance.



Casa Azul, Mexico City





Museo Jumex, Mexico City

Afterwards, take a special guided visit to the Museo Jumex, which holds one of Latin America's most extensive private collections of contemporary art. Designed by the architect David Chipperfield, this remarkable museum showcases works by acclaimed artists such as Andy Warhol, Cy Twombly, and Damien Hirst. Dinner tonight is at leisure. B,L

#### MONDAY, MARCH 4: MEXICO CITY

Begin your day with a private visit to the studio of Gabriel Orozco, one of the most influential and intriguing contemporary artists of his generation. Orozco is known for his exploration of drawing, photography, sculpture, and installation. His work is often playful and thought-provoking, and it has been exhibited in major museums around the world. You may have an opportunity to meet the artist. If time permits, you can also visit the studio of Damian Ortega, a sculptor who incorporates everyday objects into his works that combine humor with perceptive observations of societal conditions.

Afterwards, upon invitation of the owners, visit the Luis Barragán-inspired home of artist Pedro Reyes and his fashion-designer wife, Carla Fernandez. This Brutalist-styled structure features locally crafted cement blocks and an expansive double-height library. Have lunch together at a nearby eatery, then visit the Kurimanzutto Gallery, which boasts a roster of important local and international artists housed in an exquisite Alberto Kalach-designed contemporary space. In the evening, enjoy dinner at one of Mexico City's finest restaurants, helmed by a chef known for her creative and innovative take on Mexican cuisine. B,L,D



Templo de Santo Domingo, Oaxaca

#### TUESDAY, MARCH 5: MEXICO CITY / OAXACA

Take a morning flight to Oaxaca, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and mecca for Indigenous culture, authentic craftwork, and gastronomy. Arrive in Oaxaca City in time for lunch together.

In the afternoon, take a walking tour of the city's historical center, stopping at the baroque Templo de Santo Domingo, a stunning example of Spanish colonial architecture and home to a number of important works of art. Enjoy the traffic-free Zócalo, Oaxaca City's main square, with its elegant *portales*, and browse through the city's colorful markets, where you can find everything from traditional handicrafts to fresh produce. Delve into Oaxaca's rich textile tradition during a guided visit at the Museo Textil de Oaxaca, which houses a collection of more than 10,000 textiles, many of them a century or more old. This evening, venture off the beaten path to a local *mezcaleria* to taste *mezcal*, sampling its distinctive smoky flavor. Dinner is at leisure. B,L



Museo Textil de Oaxaca





Mayan Carvings, Monte Albán

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6: OAXACA / MONTE ALBÁN / TEOTITLÁN DEL VALLE / OAXACA

On a morning tour, go behind the scenes at one of Mexico's best preserved and culturally rich archaeological sites: Monte Albán. Join an expert guide in this former Zapotec capital and admire many of its structures, from palaces and temples to a ball court. Afterwards, drive to Teotitlán del Valle, a village known for its incredible weavers and textiles. Visit a local family who specialize in spinning and weaving the famous Oaxacan rugs, highly prized by collectors for their use of natural and organic dyes, made from fruit, vegetables, and even an insect called the *cochineal*. Next, tour the studio of a master painter and sculptor who makes unique designs of Oaxacan magical realism in watercolors, oils, bronze, and fabrics. Meet his Zapotec weaving family and stay for a traditional lunch. Gather later for a festive farewell dinner. B,L,D

### THURSDAY, MARCH 7 OAXACA / RETURN

Transfer to the Oaxaca airport this morning for your flights home. B

**PLEASE NOTE:** This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of Museum Travel Alliance For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms](http://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms).

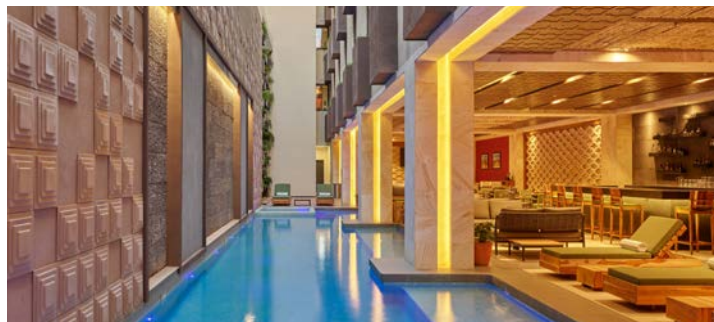
Cover photo: Teotihuacan Galleries, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City

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## ACCOMMODATIONS



Grand Fiesta Americana, Oaxaca

### JW MARRIOTT HOTEL MEXICO CITY POLANCO

This luxurious modern retreat is conveniently located near attractions such as Chapultepec Castle, the National Auditorium, Teotihuacan, and the Xochimilco-Floating Gardens. Guests can enjoy stylish rooms with marble bathrooms. Dining options include the hotel's own Xanat Bistro & Terraza, which serves Mexican cuisine. For relaxation, take a dip in the outdoor pool or visit the health club stocked with cardio equipment and free weights. Additionally, the hotel provides helipad access and complimentary transportation for guests to and from the helipad.

### GRAND FIESTA AMERICANA, OAXACA

With a contemporary and refreshing ambiance, the hotel showcases a light color palette and utilizes natural materials such as wood and stone. The welcoming entrance hall and central patio seamlessly blend nature and architecture, adorned with cacti and agave plants. The 144 rooms exude style and comfort, ensuring a delightful stay.

### PROGRAM RATE

**\$7,999 per person, double rate**

**\$8,999 single rate**

### RATE INCLUDES

- Six nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine at dinners
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/hotel/airport group transfers for all participants on suggested flights
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

**NOT INCLUDED IN RATES** International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for those on suggested flights; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.



Monte Albán

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To reserve a place, please call Museum Travel Alliance at 212-324-1893 or 855-533-0033, fax: 212-344-7493; email: [trips@museumtravelalliance.com](mailto:trips@museumtravelalliance.com); or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$1,000 per person (of which \$500 is non-refundable for administrative fees) to *Museum Travel Alliance*. Mail to: Museum Travel Alliance, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name in full as on passport. Please print.

Date of Birth

Name in full as on passport. Please print.

Date of Birth

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone (home)

(business)

Fax

E-mail

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

Hotel room preference ☐ One bed ☐ Two beds ☐ Single

I wish to share a room with \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM OF PAYMENT**

Enclosed is my check (payable to *Museum Travel Alliance*)

☐ Debit card

☐ Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the *Terms & Conditions* of this Program (see <https://museumtravelalliance.com/faq.php> to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment by check, wire transfer, or credit card 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date