

History, Traditions & Ancient Ruins of Veracruz

A 7 Day Journey to Explore the Early Civilizations of Veracruz, México

The cultural blend of Spanish, European, Caribbean, and African influences combined with the customs of the original indigenous people make the state of Veracruz a veritable melting pot rich in history, traditions, music, and dance. Add to this the ancient archaeological ruins sites and artifacts left by the Olmec, Totonac, and Huasteca populations and you will discover a land overflowing with a colorful story of conquest, human sacrifice, myths, slavery, assimilation, and world trade.

On this fun and informative trip to the tropical areas of Veracruz, your personal local Spanish/English speaking guide will be with you each day as you explore several archaeological ruins sites, an anthropology museum, and other areas that played a key roll regarding the history of the Spanish conquest of the *New World*. In addition, you will have the opportunity to visit the port city of Veracruz and the capital of the state of Veracruz - Xalapa. There will also be time to just enjoy a sandy beach adjacent to the warm waters of the Gulf of México and relax in a pool of hot natural spring water.



Trip Itinerary

- Day 1:** Arrive in the city of Veracruz
- Day 2:** Explore the Archaeological Ruins of *El Tajin*
See the Papantla Voladores (Fliers)
Tour of the city of Papantla
- Day 3:** Quiahuiztlan Archaeological Ruins
Soak in Natural Thermal Spring Water
- Day 4:** Zempoala Archaeological Ruins
Tracing the Footsteps of Hernan Cortez in La Antigua
See the first Church built in all of the Americas
Beach time to relax & swim
- Day 5:** Xalapa's Anthropology Museum
City Tour of the Xalapa (capital of Veracruz)
Participate in an Ancient Temazcal Ceremony
- Day 6:** Historical City Tour of Veracruz
Harbor Boat Ride
Farewell Dinner
- Day 7:** Travel day home

Trip Fee: \$1077 USD per person

Single Supplement: \$157 USD

Rates based on double occupancy at 3 star hotels

All fees are listed in US dollars / Trip prices and itinerary subject to change

Group Size: 2 - 7 people (larger groups can be accommodated)

Minimum Age: 9 years old

Includes: Airport pickup in Veracruz, all ground transportation, all entrance fees, local bilingual guide, tours per itinerary, hotel lodgings, bottled water each day, 5 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 3 dinners

Not included: Airfare, meals not listed above, drinks with meals, travel insurance, and gratuities

Upcoming Trip Dates

2010

Contact us for
available dates

2011

January 9 - 15
January 29 - February 4
July 3 - 9
August 6 - 12
September 26 - October 2

If you like this trip but have other dates in mind,
then please contact us to explore the possibilities.



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Make plans to reserve your trip TODAY!



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Trip Itinerary



Day 1: Arrival in the city of Veracruz

Your bilingual trip guide will be waiting for you upon your **arrival at the Veracruz Airport**. From there it is just a short 45 minute ride the small seaside town of Chachalacas where you will be staying at a local family-owned hotel. Personalized service is the key as the owners also live there. Our hotel is located a short walk from the sandy beaches of the Gulf of México. The rest of the day is free to explore the town and begin to acclimate to the slower-paced life here in Veracruz.

Day 2: Explore the Ruins of El Tajin / See the Papantla Voladores (Fliers) / Tour the town of Papantla

After breakfast, you will journey north several hours to visit the ancient ruins site of **El Tajin**. Along the way, your guide will point out other interesting geographical features and explain some of the history associated with the areas you will be travelling through. The Totonacan people built over 150 structures including 17 ball courts and flourished there between 800 and 1150 A.D. The most famous structure at El Tajin is called, the **Pyramid of the Niches**. An onsite guide will escort your group on a tour of the major structures and answer your questions. The starting point of the tour will be at a small museum located near the entrance of the site. Later, you will have the opportunity to witness the **ceremonial flight of the Voladores**. Five men (*Voladores* or fliers) will reenact high above the ground an ancient ritual which was performed by the Totonacs to appease their god of fertility to bless the area with an abundance of food and water. After lunch, you will get the opportunity to take a **tour of the interesting town of Papantla**. This northern area of Veracruz is known for growing vanilla. You will overnight at a hotel in a small town near the ocean. (B,L,D)

Day 1: Arrival in the city of Veracruz

Day 3: Quiahuiztlan Archaeological Ruins / Soak in Natural Thermal Water

Heading south this morning, your tour guide will take you to **explore the ruins of Quiahuiztlan** (*Key-ah-wheetz-lan*). This peaceful remote site is located at a higher elevation with a stunning backdrop of the Gulf of México coastline. One of the more interesting aspects of this site is the 70 small miniature temples or tombs used by the wealthy people as their final resting place. After lunch, you will travel to a small town where natural hot spring water flows from the ground. The locals have captured this water and channeled it into a swimming pool where you can **relax and soak in these therapeutic waters**. You will overnight again in Chachalacas. (B,L)

Day 4: Cempoala Ruins / Tracing the Footsteps of Cortez in La Antigua / Beach Time

Today you will travel to **see the Cempoala Ruins**. Back in the 14th and 15th centuries, Cempoala was the capital of the Totonacans as well as the largest city on the Gulf of México with over 30,000 people living there. This is also an important place because Cortez first struck an alliance with the Totonacan chief to help him defeat the Aztecs who had invaded that area. Then you will **travel to the small town of La Antigua** where you will see the remains of what is thought to be an administration building built by Cortez and his soldiers. Your guide will explain the known history of this complex as well as give you a tour of how this riverside town was laid out back in the early 1500s. It is also in Antigua that you will see the very first Church built in the Americas. There will be time in the late afternoon to **enjoy the beaches of Chachalacas**. *Optional Activity*: Experience a fun ATV Beach & Sand Dunes Ride. (B,L)

Day 5: Xalapa's Anthropology Museum / Tour of Xalapa / Temazcal Ceremony

After breakfast, you will travel to the bustling city of Xalapa (*Ha-la-pa*) which is the capital of Veracruz. This city is rich in culture with art galleries, interesting small shops, and is home to the University of Veracruz as well as the **very modern Anthropological Museum**. Here you will find the largest collection of artifacts from the people who once lived in the Mexican gulf coast region. One of the main attractions on display are the huge Olmec stone heads. After a **tour of the main sites in Xalapa**, you will then travel to the riverside town of Jalcomulco where your group will have the opportunity to **participate in an ancient Temazcal Ceremony**. This ritual was conducted to cleanse the body, mind, and spirit. Later, you will travel back to your hotel in Chachalacas. (B,L,D)

Day 6: City of Veracruz Tour / Harbor Boat Ride / Farewell Dinner

Your **tour of the historical port city of Veracruz** will include a visit to two different forts, the Naval Museum, and a walking tour of the market area and the main plazas. After lunch, your group will **board one of the harbor ferries for a 45 minute tour of the city by boat**. In the evening, everyone will get together for a **farewell dinner** at a nice restaurant in the city with your tour guide to celebrate the conclusion of a great trip. Your overnight accommodations will be at one of the hotels in Veracruz. (B,L,D)

Day 7: Travel day home