



Experience Zapotec Arts and Culture with Ancestros Travel

SAMPLE OAXACA ARTS WEEK ITINERARY

Overview

Ancestros Travel invites you to explore the true heart of Mexico's vibrant arts traditions with us in Oaxaca. Together we will meet the master artists who sustain and illuminate Oaxaca's creative soul, touching on important issues of authenticity, ingenuity and innovation. Each day will bring you closer to the creative people whose lives are devoted to mastering artforms that are appreciated around the world. Together, they are the soul of Oaxaca.

We are proud to be the leading indigenously operated travel program to come from Teotitlan del Valle. I am honored to have the added distinction of being recognized by the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, the New York Times, the Textile Museum in Washington, DC, and the International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe, among other national institutions. My family and I were the first Zapotec weavers to have a solo exhibition in Oaxaca's Textile Museum and we have contributed our unique natural dyes and weaving materials to the Forbes Pigment Collection, the world-renowned collection of Harvard University's Fogg Art Museum.

Oaxaca is a land of tradition, ancient arts, creativity and change. The villages of the Central Valleys are deeply rooted ancient Zapotec communities. You're invited to explore our history, cultural significance and creative vision with us on this unique week-long journey through Oaxaca. Our exclusive travel program offers a taste of the ancient and contemporary, the seemingly permanent and the dynamically changing. We are deeply honored to share it all with you when you visit Oaxaca with us.

~ Porfirio Gutiérrez



Day 1: Arrival in Oaxaca

Airlines: Oaxaca is served by flights via Mexico City as well as direct flights from LAX, DFW and IAH. Please check with the airlines for current routes, fares and arrival schedules.

You'll be warmly welcomed to Oaxaca with a light meal after you check in to your room. We'll get to know one another and review our plans for an exciting week together. For late arrivals, we will postpone our itinerary review until breakfast the next morning.

Day 2: Zapotec history and Colonial Oaxaca City

After breakfast at the hotel our group will take a stroll through our beautiful historic centro, seeing centuries of architecture and getting to know the city. We'll have a private tour of the incredible 16th century Oaxacan Cultural Museum at Santo Domingo, appreciating the treasures found at Monte Alban and the aerial view of the Ethnobotanical Gardens. Seeing the origins of Zapotec culture and its many accomplishments, we'll have a foundation for appreciating the fine art and crafts made by the masters we'll be visiting. After a delicious mole tamale lunch nearby at La Olla, we'll continue on to the Zocalo, Cathedral and highlights along the Alcala. The evening is yours for dinner out, or a personal mezcal tasting class at Mezcaloteca (by reservation only).

Highlights

- Cultural Museum private tour
- Lunch at La Olla
- Walking through the Historic Centro
- Included meals: Lunch



Day 3: The fabric of Teotitlán's Zapotec Identity

We'll start our day with breakfast at the hotel, then depart for our studio in Teotitlán del Valle. Here you'll see how the old ways are still practiced and sustained in harmony with nature and tradition. Your group will receive a traditional copal welcome blessing from a family elder, then be introduced to the studio's renowned weaving and natural dyes practices. During the Red Hand workshop everyone will

learn to dye their own cochineal scarf to take home. As your cochineal dye project dries in the sun you'll explore the pueblo's cultural center and appreciate why living traditions resonate so much in this Zapotec village.

Highlights

- Red Hand Cochineal dyeing workshop with take-home scarf
- Walk through Teotitlán's community center and church
- Included meals:Lunch

Day 4: Living Folk Art Traditions

With such a rich variety of traditions to explore, we'll begin our day at the beautiful folk art museum in the pueblo of San Bartolo. Exquisite examples of alebrijes, black pottery and embroidery are on display. In this village are families who sustain important craft traditions and we will visit several studios to get to know them and their incredible work. You'll be hungry, so we'll pause for a leisurely lunch of traditional Zapotec dishes on an outdoor patio before returning to the city in the late afternoon.

Highlights

- Meet noted families who are sustaining important craft traditions
- Private tour of the Museo Estatal de Arte Popular (Folk Art Museum)
- Lunch at charming outdoor patio Azucena Zapoteca
- Included meals: Lunch



Day 5: Your day to explore

It's all about you today! Explore on your own, visit the mercados, take a Monte Alban morning visit, or tour the Textile Museum and Cultural Center. In the evening learn the secrets of mezcal in a private tasting room. We'll help everyone have the kind of day that gives them just what they are looking for in Oaxaca.

- Use our self-guided walking tour or we'll help with a reservation; local guides available

DAY 6: Silver threads and golden needles

We're fortunate to know one of Oaxaca's best filigree jewelry families, and today they will welcome you to their home studio. After seeing how their fine designs come to life in silver, you'll have time to find just the right piece to bring home with you. A short ride away is the pueblo of Atzompa, known for its distinctive green pottery. Let's visit a local cooperative gallery

before returning to the city for lunch. Before the day is complete, we'll have a private meeting with Remegio Mestas, one of Oaxaca's most respected textile experts, who will take you through his private collection.

Highlights

- Silver filigree jewelry studio
- Atzompa green pottery gallery
- Private textile collection studio visit
- Included meals: lunch

Day 7: Contemporary Cochineal Painting and CASA San Agustin, Etna

In the hills above Oaxaca City we'll visit the studio of noted contemporary painting Edgar Jahir, who works with cochineal pigments in his unique compositions. We'll also have a private tour of CASA, a contemporary arts center transformed from a 19th century textile mill by Maestro Francisco Toledo. This inspiring arts center houses galleries, studios, classrooms and a thriving contemporary craft industry. Lunch today features family recipe mole on an outdoor patio.

Highlights

- CASA arts center private tour
- Cochineal Painting studio visit with Edgar Jahir
- Included meals: lunch

Day 8: Mitla and Yagul

Mitla is one of Zapotec culture's most sacred sites, where rituals related to the afterlife were observed for centuries. The site is one of the best preserved, and we will begin our day exploring what was once part of a vast network of Zapotec establishments. Modern-day Mitla is one of Oaxaca's pueblo magicos, known for beautiful cotton weaving, so there will be time to visit a few shops and galleries before a traditional lunch in town. On the way back we will stop at Yagul, another beautiful archeological site in the hills above the valley. If time allows for a mezcal tasting, we can finish our day with a toast before returning to the city. You'll be back in the city to say farewell, enjoy a last dinner, and reflect on the week we've shared.

Highlights

- Mitla and Yagul sites
- Exploring the pueblo magico
- Included meals: lunch

Day 9 - Departure day

We will arrange airport transfers, allowing 2 ½ hours before departure time for all flights. The direct LAX Volaris flight departs at 10:30 AM. Guests wishing to extend their stay are invited to work with us directly for hotel extension and any other preferred activities.

All itineraries subject to change. Travel fee includes hotel, meals as noted, all ground transportation, entry fees, experienced guides and interpreters, plus travel planning. Trip fee is exclusive of airfare, alcoholic beverages, gratuities, personal purchases, discretionary spending and travel insurance. Guests may choose to extend their stay and we will help with those plans.



Travel Program Highlights

- Exclusive small group experiences limited to 12 guests
- Personal encounters with noted artisans in their homes and studios
- Unique first-hand perspective on indigenous culture in Oaxaca
- Direct support of Oaxacan people and local economies through your travel fees
- Boutique hotel accommodations and comfortable daily excursions
- Personalized travel planning and guiding every day of your trip