

CHICHÉN ITZÁ



MAYAN CUISINE



CHICHÉN ITZÁ

WONDER OF THE MODERN WORLD

The city was declared World Heritage by the UNESCO in 1988, and The Castle of Kukulcan a Wonder of the Modern World in 2007.

The name, derived from Chi-ch'en Itza, means "the city on the edge of the Itzaes well."

The entire city came to cover 25 km. The religious, cultural, and administrative center covered about 6 km.



RECORD OF VISITORS

This ancient Maya city welcomes over 2,500,000 visitors per year

THE HIGHLIGHTS



SACRED CENOTE

Its diameter from north to south is 50 meters, and from east to west, 61 meters. The mirror of water is located 22 meters from the ground and has a depth of 13.5 meters. As part of the worship offered to the god of water, ceremonial offerings were made by throwing precious objects into the well.

OBSERVATORY

Also known as “The Snail,” it is one of the few circular buildings constructed by the Mayans; and it is believed to have been used for astronomical observations. It is constructed by 3 superimposed buildings and has a total height of 23 meters.



TEMPLE OF THE WARRIORS

It is a structure 12 meters high and 40 meters wide, where reliefs of warriors, eagles, and jaguars devouring human hearts can be observed. It consists of 4 platforms surrounded by 200 columns, all carved with images of Toltec warriors.

THE GREAT BALLGAME

The Chichen Itza ballcourt is the largest of all in Mesoamerica, measuring 120 meters in length and 30 meters in width. Its platforms rise to a height of 8 meters and stretch for 95 meters in length. There is a unique acoustic phenomenon in this field: if one speaks in the temple at the southern end, their voice can be heard at the opposite end, as the sound reverberates along the walls of the northern temple.



CASTLE OF KUKULKAN

One of the tallest and most remarkable examples of Maya architecture. It has a rectangular base of 55.5 meters wide and a height of 24 meters. It features 4 staircases with 91 steps each, plus a final step leading to the upper temple, totaling 365 steps, one for each day of the year. Its main facade has two columns representing serpents with open jaws.

In 1997, the universities of Minnesota and San Francisco conducted studies in the area, discovering a hidden cenote beneath The Castle. In 2015, the Institute of Geophysics of the UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico) conducted magnetic resonance imaging that allowed them to map the structure of the cenote, hidden eight meters below the pyramid. In 2017, the research team of the Great Maya Aquifer began exploring nearby caves to find an entrance to this body of water. However, the entrance was blocked by stones, likely intentionally placed. It is believed that this cenote remained hidden because it represented the center of the world.

THE DESCENT OF KUKULKAN

During the spring equinox, thousands of visitors gather to witness the phenomena of natural light and shadow movements. Especially the snake that descends step by step on the pyramid of The Castle. The shadow effect created by the Mayans shows a 120-foot-long serpent crawling down to join a huge snake head at the end of the staircase. This is a demonstration of how astonishing and precise Maya astronomy is, along with their impressive architecture and incredible knowledge of geometry.



MAYAN ASTROLOGY

Mayan astrology is a complex system based on the detailed observation of celestial bodies and their influence on daily life, religion, and agriculture. The Mayans were expert astronomers who developed an intricate system of calendars and beliefs related to the cycles of the cosmos. They studied the movements of the sun, the moon, Venus, and other stars and planets. These observations allowed them to predict astronomical phenomena such as eclipses, which held great ceremonial importance.

Mayan astrology, also known as the Mayan horoscope, also has zodiac signs based on the sacred 260-day Tzolk'in calendar. This calendar combines 20 signs or "nahuales," which represent different cosmic energies and deities, with 13 numbers, creating a 260-day cycle.

Here are the 20 Mayan zodiac signs, also known as "nahuales":



1. **Imix (Crocodile):** It represents the beginning and creation. Impulsive, creative people with renewing energy.



2. **Ik' (Wind):** Related to communication and spirituality. They are dynamic, intelligent, and persuasive people.



3. **Ak'b'al (Night):** It signifies introspection and mystery. People with emotional depth, introspective, and sensitive.



4. **K'an (Corn or Seed):** Associated with prosperity and growth. People with a talent for generating resources and an optimistic vision.



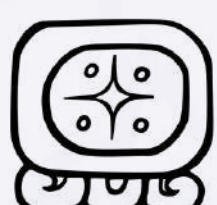
5. **Chikchan (Snake):** It represents vitality and passion. Intense, strong people with great vital energy.



6. **Kimi (Death):** It symbolizes transformation. People with the ability to change and evolve, intuitive and wise.



7. **Manik' (Deer):** Associated with stability and connection to nature. They are calm, balanced, and supportive people.



8. **Lamat (Star):** Related to beauty and harmony. Artistic people with creative and aesthetic skills.



9. **Muluk (Water):** It symbolizes emotions and sensitivity. Intuitive people, connected to their feelings, sometimes mysterious.



10. **Ok (Dog):** It represents loyalty and protection. Loyal, honest people with a great capacity for friendship.



11. **Chuwen (Monkey):** Related to creativity and humor. Witty people with a talent for fun and artistic expression.



12. **Eb (Grass):** It symbolizes health and the path of life. Altruistic people with a strong vocation for serving others.



13. **Ben (Reed):** Associated with growth and inner strength. Resilient people with the ability to overcome obstacles.



14. **Ix (Jaguar):** It represents power and magic. People with mystical abilities, natural leaders, brave, and protective.



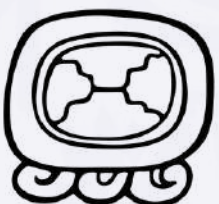
15. **Men (Eagle):** It symbolizes vision and success. People with foresight, determined, and focused on their goals.



16. **Kib' (Owl or Vulture):** Related to healing and ancestral wisdom. Spiritual people, healers, with great intuition.



17. **Kaban (Earth):** It represents intelligence and understanding. Analytical, practical, and reflective people.



18. **Etz'nab (Flint):** Associated with clarity and truth. People who seek justice, determined, and with strong principles.



19. **Kawak (Storm):** It symbolizes the power of change and purification. Transformative people, strong, with the ability to regenerate.

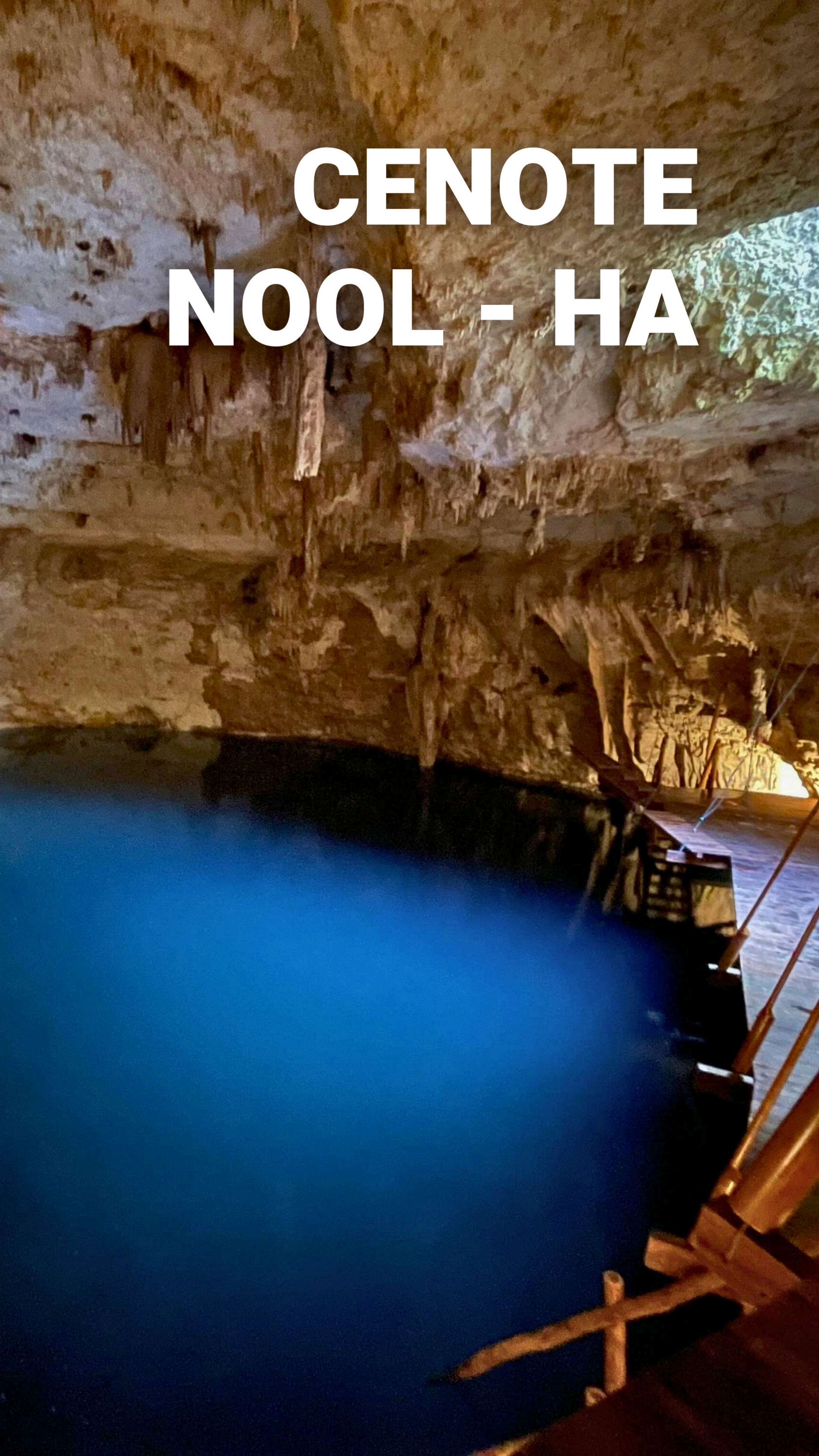


20. **Ajaw (Sun):** It represents leadership and enlightenment. Charismatic people, generous, and those who inspire others.

Each of these signs has a special meaning in the Mayan worldview, influencing the personality and destiny of those born under their influence.

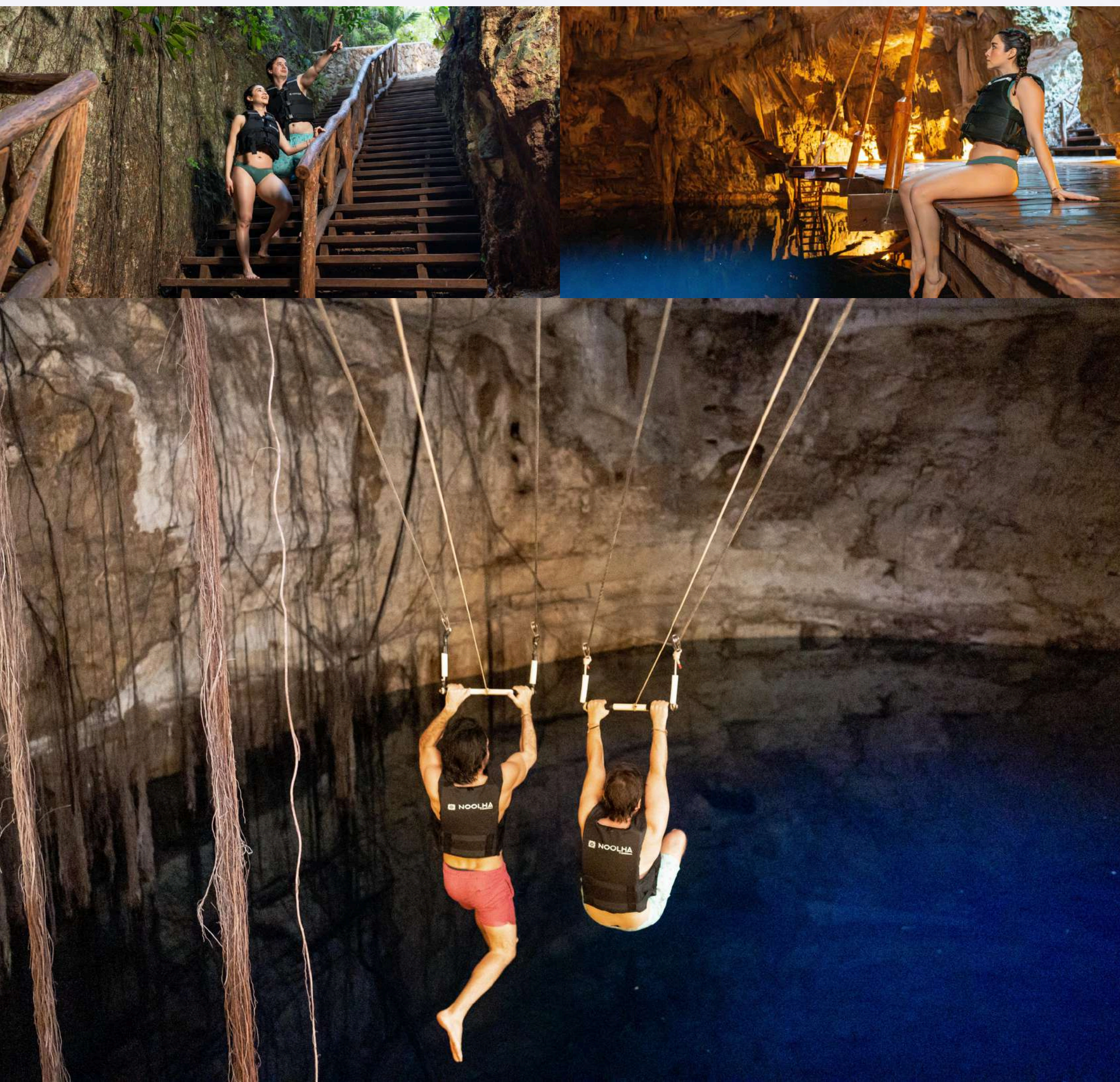
Since the Mayan signs depend on the Tzolk'in, the cycle repeats every 260 days, so it is not possible to assign a fixed date range for the signs that is the same each year, as happens in the Western zodiac. To determine a person's exact sign according to their birth date, a specific conversion between the Gregorian calendar and the Mayan calendar is required.

CENOTE NOOL - HA

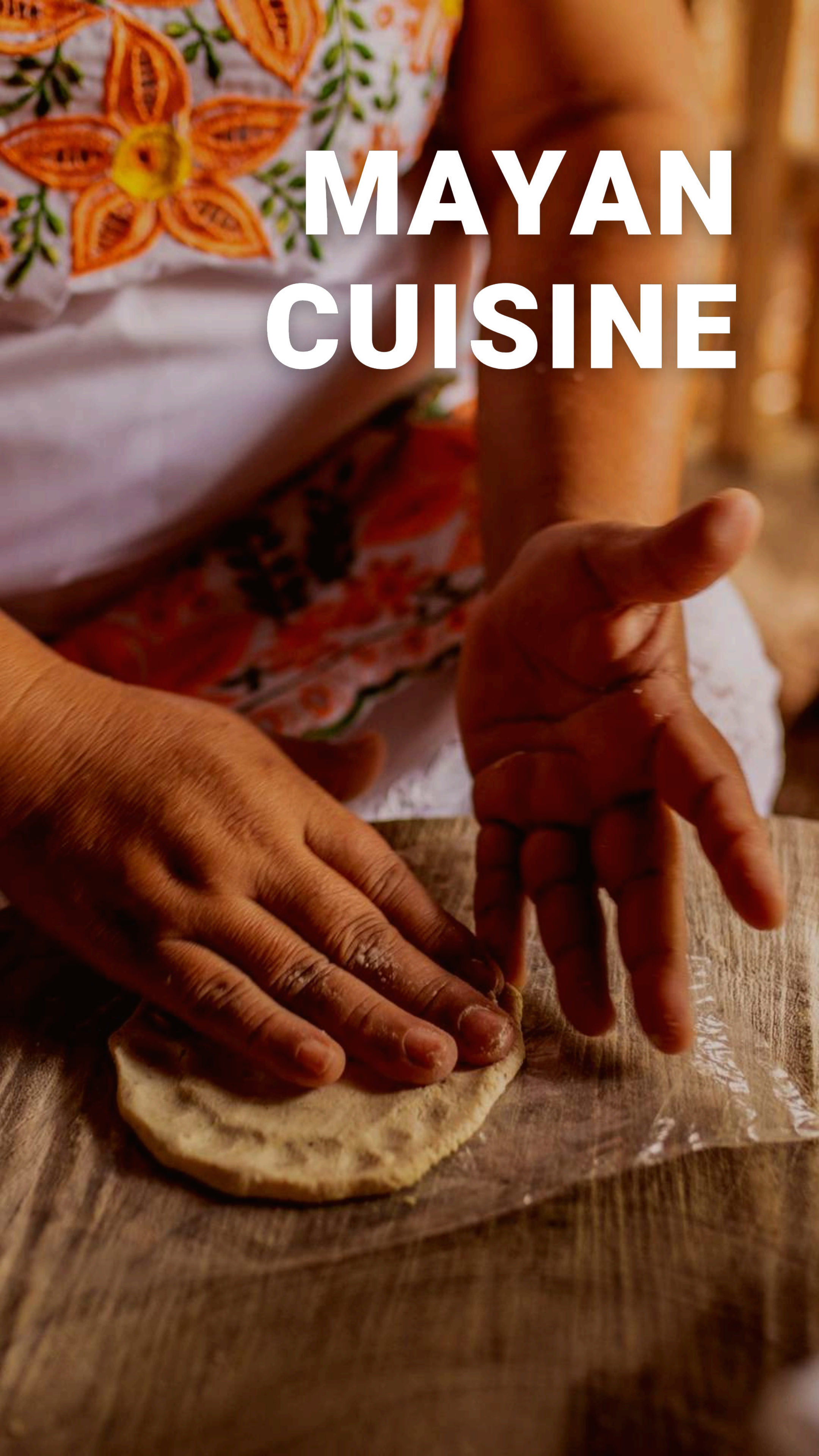


This cave-type cenote, located 5 minutes from Chichikan and at the entrance to Valladolid, offers a unique experience that blends natural beauty, history, and adventure. With crystal-clear waters of vibrant blue and surrounded by rocky formations, the place has a mystical atmosphere that connects with Mayan culture. It also features a zip line that allows visitors to glide over the water while enjoying panoramic views.

Considered by the Mayans as a sacred portal, the cenote remains a site of great cultural significance. Easily accessible from Valladolid, this cenote is perfect for swimming, enjoying nature, and having an exciting experience. It is recommended to wear comfortable clothing, non-slip footwear, and sunscreen, as well as to respect the natural surroundings of the place.



MAYAN CUISINE





CULINARY BASES

Yucatan's cuisine is a blend of ingredients used by the ancient Mayans (with corn being the main one) and flavors brought by the Spanish during the colonial period. The most commonly used condiments and spices include pumpkin seeds, oregano, purple onion, sour orange, sweet pepper, lime, tomato, annatto, xkatik chili, habanero chili, max chili, and cilantro. Yucatán was known as "the land of pheasant and deer" due to the use of these species as main ingredients in its dishes. Currently, they have been replaced by pork and turkey meat.

TECHNIQUES

CHAK, CHAKBIL O CHAKBIJ

This procedure consists of boiling or simmering the food in water seasoned with certain condiments, which can include salt, pepper, garlic, and oregano. It is also called ts'anchak, which means cooked in water with minimal seasoning, derived from ts'am (to soak) and chak (to boil in water).

POOK

Toast.

CHUK

Grilling over live coals or charcoal.

MUKTA'AN

Cooking under ashes.

BUTS'BIL

Smoke-cook.



PIBIL

A hole is dug in the ground to be used as an oven (this is called a "pib"), and then the base is filled with wood embers. On top of these embers, stone slabs are placed and heated, followed by the meat that will be cooked.

REPRESENTATIVE DISHES



BEANS WITH PORK



TAMALES



LOMITOS

COCHINITA PIBIL

Preparation of pork marinated with bitter orange, red achiote paste, black pepper, cumin, cinnamon, and cloves. The meat is served in tacos or tortas (sandwiches) and is accompanied by habanero chili sauce.

BEANS WITH PORK

This broth with chunks of pork is cooked together with beans, onion, and epazote. It is served with diced onion, cilantro, and radish, as well as a sauce made with roasted tomatoes and habanero chili (chiltomate).

BLACK STUFFING

Its main protein is turkey or chicken. It is a broth with a distinctive dark color, and its base is a paste called "black recado" made from chilies, onion, cloves, cumin, black pepper, and garlic.

LIME SOUP

The ingredients for this broth are fried in pork lard to obtain a unique flavor. During cooking, seasonings are added, and most importantly, slices of lime are included, which give it a citrusy touch. The soup is served with fried tortilla strips and chicken.

LOMITOS

The pork loin meat is cut into small cubes (hence its name) and cooked with arbol chili, tomato, and other spices. It is often served with chopped hard-boiled eggs and can be enjoyed as a stew, in tacos, or in tortas (sandwiches).

QUESO RELLENO

Translated to "stuffed cheese" in English, is a traditional dish from the Yucatan region of Mexico. It involves a ball-shaped Edam cheese, known as "queso de bola" in Yucatan, removing the top, and hollowing out the center to fill it with a picadillo filling that is very similar to turkey stuffing. The cheese is then sliced and served with a sauce called "kol," prepared with chicken or another protein broth, flour, onion, chili, and saffron.

TAMALES

The foundation of this dish is the masa (ground corn dough), which can be filled with various fillings or mixed with chaya leaves, espelon beans, or other ingredients. The tamal is wrapped in a banana leaf and cooked by steaming, baking, or in a pib (underground oven).

COCHINITA PIBIL

This dish is the most representative of the state of Yucatan and also one of the most representative in Mexican cuisine, thanks to its history and origins that are still relevant today.

Cochinita used to be prepared in the pib (underground oven) with deer meat, pheasant, wild turkey, or peccary (mammals similar to pigs). During the conquest, the meat was replaced with pork, and over time, the cooking method was also modified.

The distinctive orange color of this dish is due to the achiote, a condiment made from the seeds of a fruit that turns red when ripe and is used to create a seasoned paste. You can enjoy this delicacy in tacos or tortas, always accompanied by purple onion and chopped habanero chili with lime.



DRINKS

XTABENTÚN

Xtabentun is a sweet liqueur with a sweet flavor and aroma. It is produced from honey made by bees that feed on the xtabentun flower, which shares similar characteristics to anise. It is consumed as a digestive and can be served neat or on the rocks.

BALCHÉ

This liqueur has been used since ancient times as a ceremonial beverage. It is made from the nectar of the Balche flower, the bark of the same tree, melipona honey, cinnamon, and anise.

CHAYA WATER

This refreshing beverage is made with one of the most important plants in Yucatecan cuisine, which, in addition to its flavor, has many health benefits.

FRUIT WATER

This refreshing beverage is made with one of the most important plants in Yucatecan cuisine, which, in addition to its flavor, has many health benefits.

SWEETS

MANJAR BLANCO

This dessert of Spanish origin was originally a savory dish. It is a custard made with coconut milk, rice, cornstarch, sugar, and cinnamon.

YUCA OR PUMPKIN SWEET

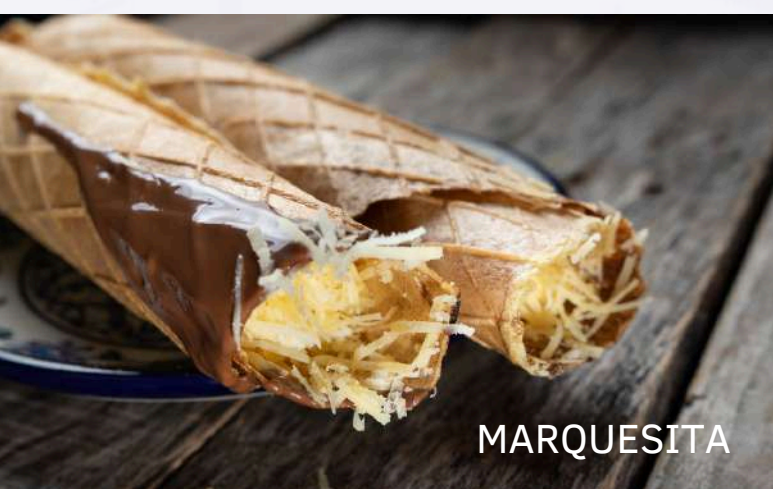
Some fruits and tubers (such as yuca and sweet potato) are cooked with cinnamon and piloncillo (unrefined cane sugar) to make this delicious dessert.

COCONUT CREAM

It can be enjoyed on its own or used as a filling for other desserts.

MARQUESITA

The most iconic dessert of Yucatan! They were created by the owner of an ice cream parlor after realizing that his sales decreased during the winter. That's how this type of crepe was born, combining the sweetness of ice cream cones with the saltiness of "queso de bola" (Edam cheese). Nowadays, other ingredients such as fruits, jams, or caramel are added to it.



MARQUESITA



COCONUT CREAM



YUCA SWEET



Black stuffing



Xtabentún



Chaya water



Lime soup



Tamal



Balché



Dragon fruit water



Stuffed cheese

CRAFTSMEN TOWN

The charming town of **Kaua**, with deep Mayan roots, is a cultural treasure where tradition and art intertwine in a unique way. This town is especially known for the production of **amate paper**, an ancestral material used by the Maya since ancient times. As one of the three great civilizations that had their own paper—amate among the Mayans, **rice paper** in China, and **papyrus** in Egypt—Kaua continues to preserve this valuable historical legacy.

In addition, Kaua is home to talented artisans who create exquisite pieces using local semi-precious stones, such as jade, obsidian, and quartz. These crafts not only reflect the artistic skill of their creators but also the spiritual and symbolic connection with nature and the Mayan legacy. Visitors can acquire unique pieces, each meticulously handmade with dedication and care.



The experience in Kaua is completed with an immersion in culinary traditions, such as the preparation of cochinita pibil in the traditional pib, an ancient cooking method that is part of the rich gastronomic heritage of the region.



Here, the meaning of the name **Kaua**, which translates to "**two tortillas**," comes to life, as handmade tortillas are a fundamental element in every meal, enhancing the flavors of traditional dishes and highlighting the deep connection of the community with its Mayan culture.



VALLADOLID

The capital of the Mayan East

Located in the eastern part of Yucatan, it was the scene of rebellions and struggles between conquerors and the conquered. This place was an important political and religious center.



MAIN ATTRACTIONS

CHURCH OF SAN SERVACIO

Built in 1545 and demolished in 1705 due to its desecration during the so-called "Crime of the Mayors". It was reconstructed in 1706 as we see it today, but this time it was given a new orientation. The church now faces north instead of west, unlike most colonial-era temples that are oriented towards Rome.

FORMER CONVENT OF SAN BERNARDINO OF SIENA

It is one of the oldest and most important colonial complexes in the state. It was founded around 1552, being the second one built in Latin America.

CENTRAL PARK

Its welcoming main park offers the shade of its laurel trees to locals and strangers alike, and in the evenings, birds fill the air with their songs, announcing the end of the day. This place is ideal for a peaceful walk while enjoying some of the delicacies it offers, such as marquesitas, ice cream, churros, esquites, and more.



The Mestiza fountain, central park.



Thank you for choosing Mexico as the destination to create cherished memories with your family and friends.

We are delighted to have accompanied you on your journey and hope it was as enjoyable for you as it was for us.

If you liked our service, please help us by sharing your experience.



Thank you