

# CHICHEN

## MAYAN CUISINE

GET IN TO THE  
MAYAN  
WORLD



EKINOX

T O U R S

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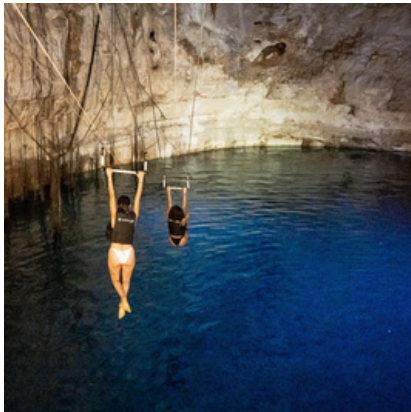
Chichén Itzá, one of the 7 Wonders of the Modern World

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CHICHEN  
MAYAN CUISINE

# CHICHÉN ITZÁ

## WONDER OF THE MODERN WORLD

The city was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988, and the Kukulkán Pyramid was named a New Wonder of the World in 2007.

Etymologically, Chi-ch'en Itzá means "the city at the edge of the well of the Itzáes."

The entire city once covered 25 km<sup>2</sup>. The religious, cultural, and administrative center spanned about 6 km<sup>2</sup>.



Chichen Mayan Cuisine Tour, winner in 2023 as one of Mexico's Top 100 Must-See Attractions.

## RECORD NUMBER OF VISITORS

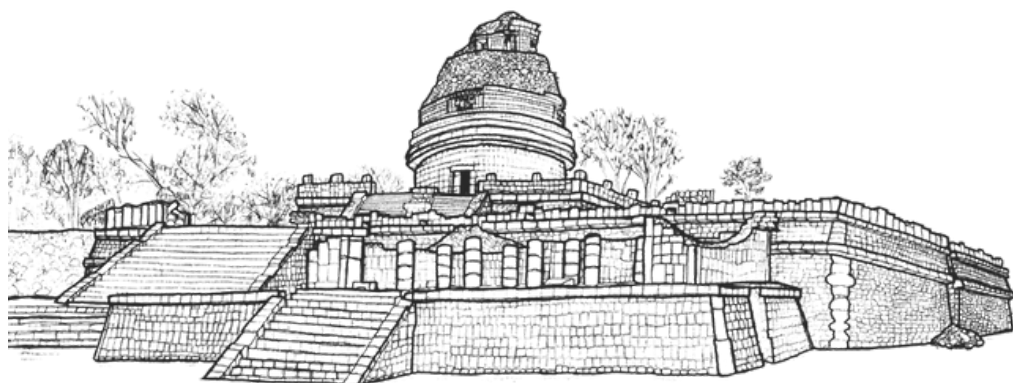
This ancient Mayan city receives over 2,500,000 visitors each year.



# THE HIGHLIGHTS OF CHICHEN ITZA

## EL CARACOL Astronomical Observatory

The Observatory of Chichén Itzá, also known as "El Caracol," is one of the few circular structures built by the Maya. Its unique design, featuring an internal spiral staircase, suggests it was used for astronomical observations, particularly of the planet Venus. Composed of three superimposed buildings and reaching a total height of 23 meters, its structure allowed alignments with important celestial phenomena. This demonstrates the advanced astronomical knowledge of the Maya, who linked these observations with their rituals and calendars.



El Caracol Observatory at Chichen Itza, Yucatan (Photo by Dandelo1 - DeviantArt)



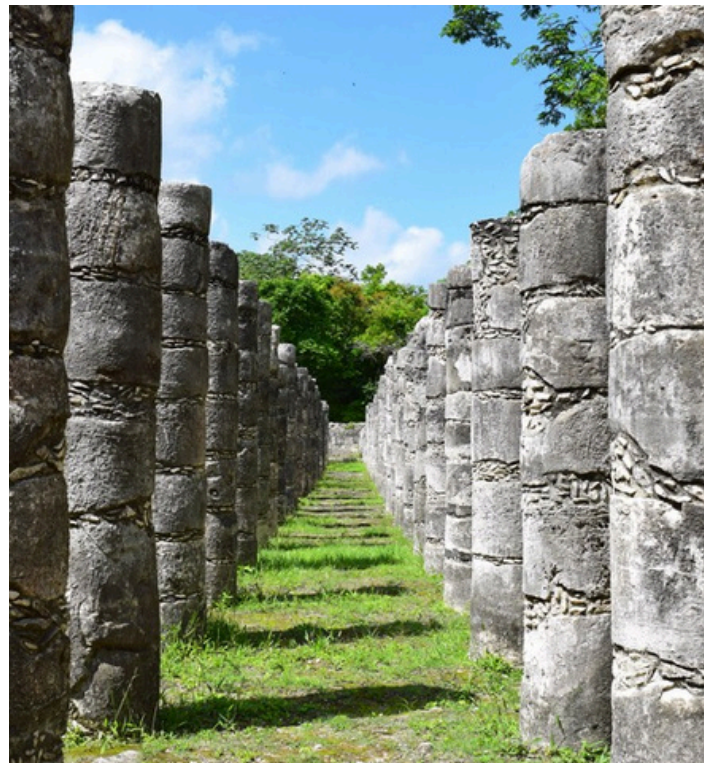


## TEMPLE OF THE WARRIORS

It is a monumental structure measuring 12 meters high and 40 meters wide. It stands out for its detailed reliefs of warriors, eagles, and jaguars devouring human hearts, highlighting its military and ceremonial significance.

It consists of four platforms and is surrounded by 200 carved columns depicting Toltec warriors, reflecting the strong Toltec influence on Mayan architecture.

The main staircase leads to a platform with a figure of Chac Mool, used for offerings, and its design showcases the cultural exchange between both civilizations.





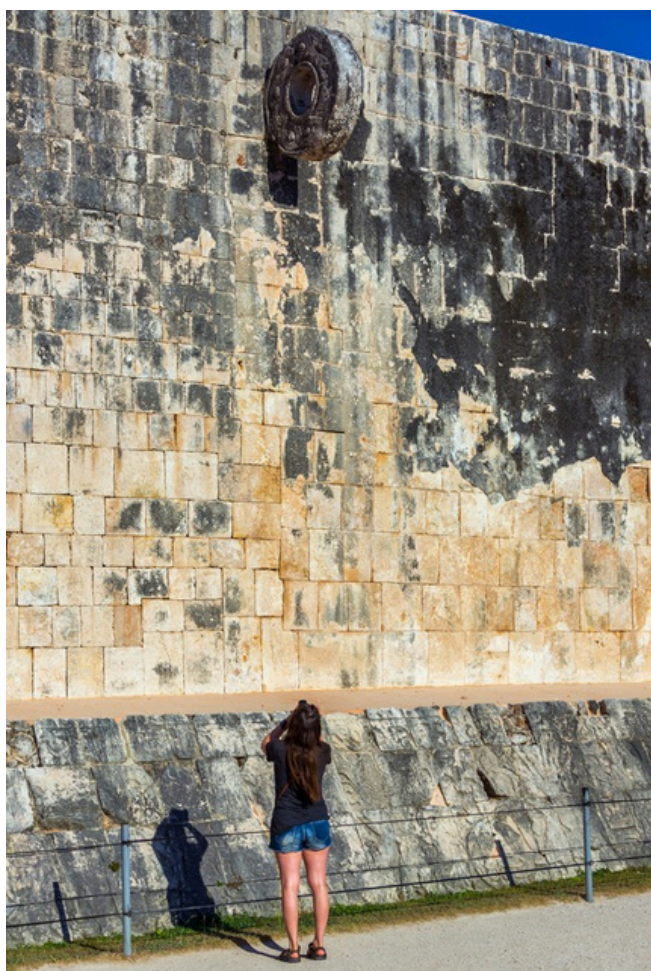


## THE GREAT BALLGAME

The Chichén Itzá ballcourt is the largest in Mesoamerica, measuring 120 meters long and 30 meters wide. Its side platforms reach 8 meters in height and are decorated with reliefs depicting ritual scenes such as sacrifices and fertility symbols.

This game held deep religious significance, linked to the duality of life and death and the underworld. It is believed that players had to pass a rubber ball through a stone hoop without using their hands or feet.

One of its most impressive features is the acoustic phenomenon: a voice spoken at one end of the court can be heard clearly at the opposite end, suggesting an intentional design for important ceremonies.





# KUKULKÁN CASTLE

The Kukulkán Pyramid is one of the most impressive examples of Mayan architecture, with a rectangular base measuring 55.5 meters wide and a height of 24 meters. It has 4 staircases with 91 steps each, plus one additional step leading to the upper temple, totaling 365 steps—one for each day of the year. On its main façade, two columns feature serpent figures with open jaws.

In 1997, studies by the universities of Minnesota and San Francisco revealed a hidden cenote beneath the pyramid, which was confirmed in 2015 by the Geophysics Institute of UNAM through magnetic resonance. In 2017, the Great Mayan Aquifer team attempted to explore nearby caves to access this cenote but found the entrance blocked by stones, possibly placed intentionally.

It is believed that this cenote had sacred significance, symbolizing the center of the world for the ancient Maya.



# SPRING EQUINOX

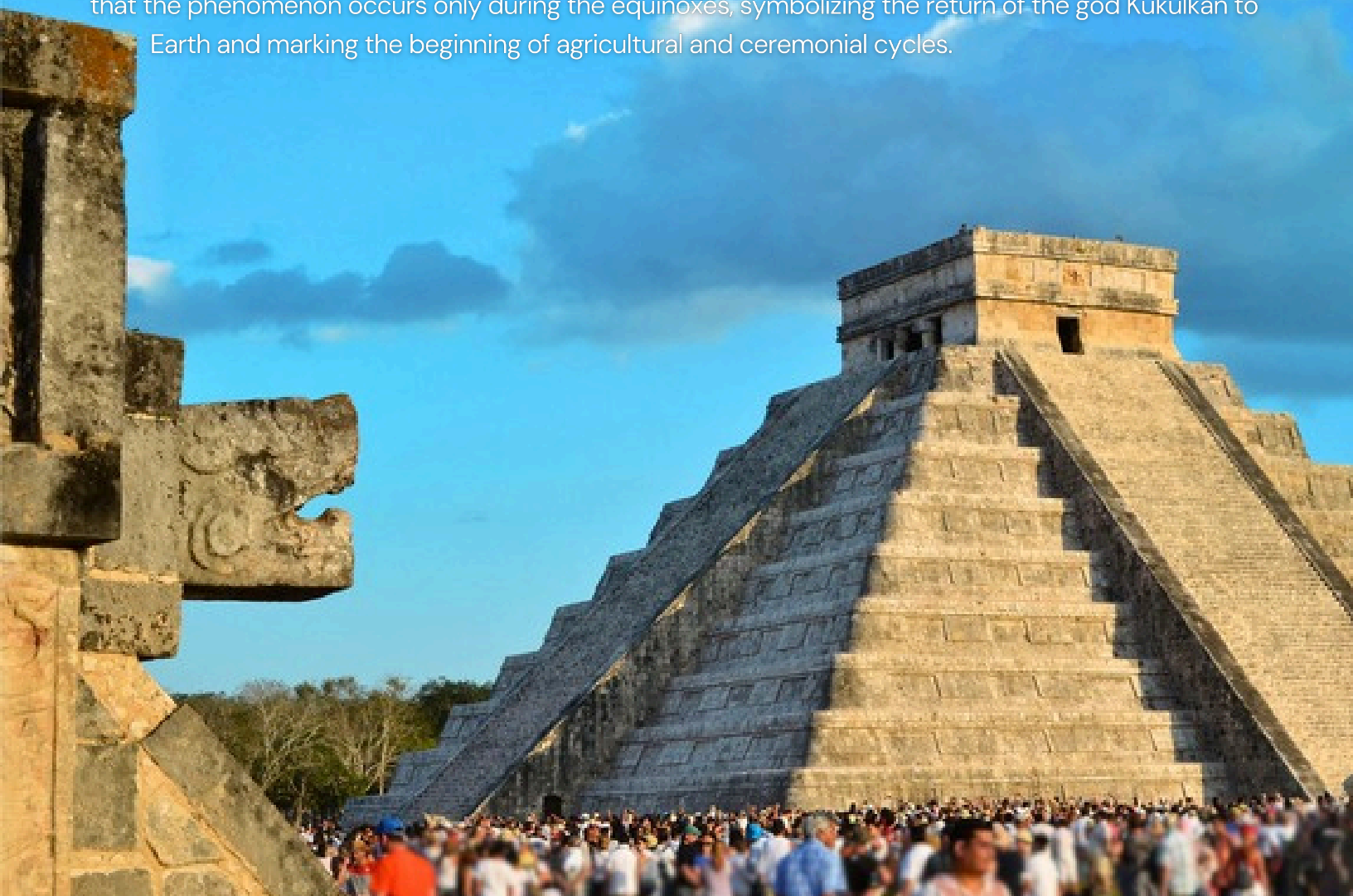
## THE DESCENT OF KUKULKÁN

One of the most fascinating phenomena in Mayan archaeology and astronomy takes place at the Kukulcán Pyramid in Chichén Itzá.

Every year, during the spring equinox (March 21) and autumn equinox (September 23), the sun creates an impressive optical effect on the temple's north staircase.

As the afternoon progresses, sunlight casts seven triangular shadows along the edges of the steps, creating the illusion of a serpent undulating down the staircase. The shadow perfectly aligns with the carved serpent heads at the base, representing Kukulcán, the feathered serpent, a central deity in Mayan cosmology.

This spectacle, which can only be observed a few hours each year, is a testament to the ancient Maya's profound astronomical knowledge. The pyramid was constructed with such precise alignment that the phenomenon occurs only during the equinoxes, symbolizing the return of the god Kukulcán to Earth and marking the beginning of agricultural and ceremonial cycles.





# MAYAN ASTROLOGY

Mayan astrology is a complex system based on detailed observation of celestial bodies and their influence on daily life, religion, and agriculture. The Maya 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, 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, includes zodiac signs based on the sacred 260-day Tzolk'in calendar. This calendar combines 20 signs or "nahuales," representing different cosmic energies and deities, with 13 numbers, creating a 260-day cycle.

Below are the 20 Mayan zodiac signs, also called "nahuales":



1. **Imix (Crocodile):** It represents the beginning and creation. People born under this sign are impulsive, creative, and possess 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):** Represents vitality and passion. People who are intense, strong, and possess great vital energy.



6. **Kimi (Dead):** 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. People who are intuitive, connected to their feelings, and 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 holds a special meaning in the Mayan worldview, influencing the personality and destiny of individuals born under their influence.

Because the Mayan signs depend on the Tzolk'in, which cycles every 260 days, it is not possible to assign fixed date ranges to the signs that remain the same each year, as is done with the Western zodiac. To determine a person's exact sign based on their birthdate, a specific conversion between the Gregorian calendar and the Mayan calendar is required.

# NOOL - HA CENOTE

The Maya used cenotes as places to perform sacrifices and offerings in order to ask for rain and fertility for their crops. Precious objects such as jewelry, pottery, and even human remains have been found in some cenotes, which were given as gifts to the gods to maintain natural balance.





## NOOL HA

This cave-type cenote, located just 5 minutes from Chichikan and at the entrance of Valladolid, offers a unique experience that blends natural beauty, history, and adventure.

With crystal-clear, vibrant blue waters surrounded by rock formations, the site has a mystical atmosphere connected to Mayan culture. Additionally, it features a zipline that allows visitors to glide over the water while enjoying panoramic views.

Considered by the Maya as a sacred portal, the cenote remains a place of great cultural importance. Easily accessible from Valladolid, this cenote is ideal for swimming, enjoying nature, and having an exciting experience.



# MAYAN CUISINE

Mayan cuisine used chili not only to add flavor but also as a natural preservative and medicine. Additionally, they combined ingredients such as corn, beans, and chili, known as the "holy trilogy," which formed the basis of their diet and provided them with essential energy, proteins, and vitamins.



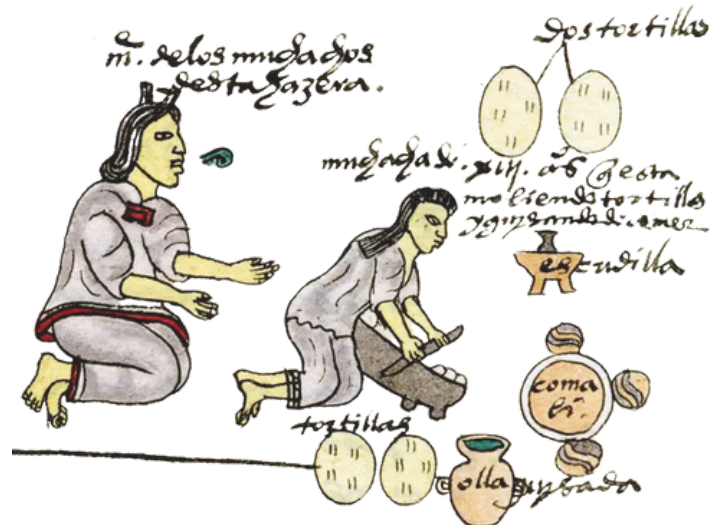


Yucatecan cuisine is a living heritage of the ancient Maya, enriched with colonial influences. Its main staple is corn, considered a sacred food, accompanied by a blend of seasonings that reflect the region's identity.

Pumpkin seeds, oregano, red onion, bitter orange, lime, tomato, achiote, xcatic chili, sweet chili, maax chili, ik habanero chili, and cilantro. This unique combination of flavors gives Yucatecan cuisine its intense, fresh, and deeply aromatic character.

In ancient times, Yucatán was known as the “land of the pheasant and the deer,” as these species were an essential part of the Mayan diet.

Today, these ingredients have mostly been replaced in traditional dishes by pork and turkey, while still maintaining the flavor and symbolism of the ritual foods.



# YUCATECAN CULINARY TECHNIQUES

## EL PIB

### The heart of ancestral Yucatecan cuisine

The pib is a traditional Mayan underground oven that gives rise to iconic dishes such as *cochinita pibil*.

It consists of a hole dug in the ground with hot embers and stones, on which the food wrapped in banana leaves is placed. Then it is sealed with earth and clay for slow and deep cooking.

This method not only retains heat for hours but also infuses the food with aromas of earth, smoke, and leaves, creating unique flavors.





# COCHINITA PIBIL

This dish is the most representative of the state of Yucatán and one of the most emblematic in Mexican gastronomy, thanks to its history and origins that remain alive today.

Originally, cochinita was prepared in the pib (earth oven) with meat from deer, pheasant, wild turkey, or peccary (a mammal similar to a pig). During the conquest, pork replaced these meats, and over time, its cooking method was also modified.

The characteristic orange color of this dish comes from achiote, a seasoning made from a fruit whose red seeds are used to create a flavorful paste.

You can enjoy this delicacy in tacos or tortas, always accompanied by pickled red onion and habanero chili chopped with lime.



# THE TORTILLA

The handmade corn tortilla is one of the most emblematic pillars of traditional Mexican cuisine. Its artisanal preparation, passed down through generations, begins with nixtamal: corn cooked with lime and then ground to form a soft, elastic dough.

Unlike industrial versions, each handmade tortilla carries the unique touch of its maker, with a thicker texture, deeper aroma, and authentic flavor that connects directly to our roots. In many communities, this process is still done daily, keeping an ancestral tradition alive.

In Maya culture and much of the Yucatán Peninsula, the tortilla is more than just food: it is a symbol of identity, sustenance, and family labor. It accompanies stews, is used as a spoon, and in some cases, is stuffed or toasted for traditional dishes.



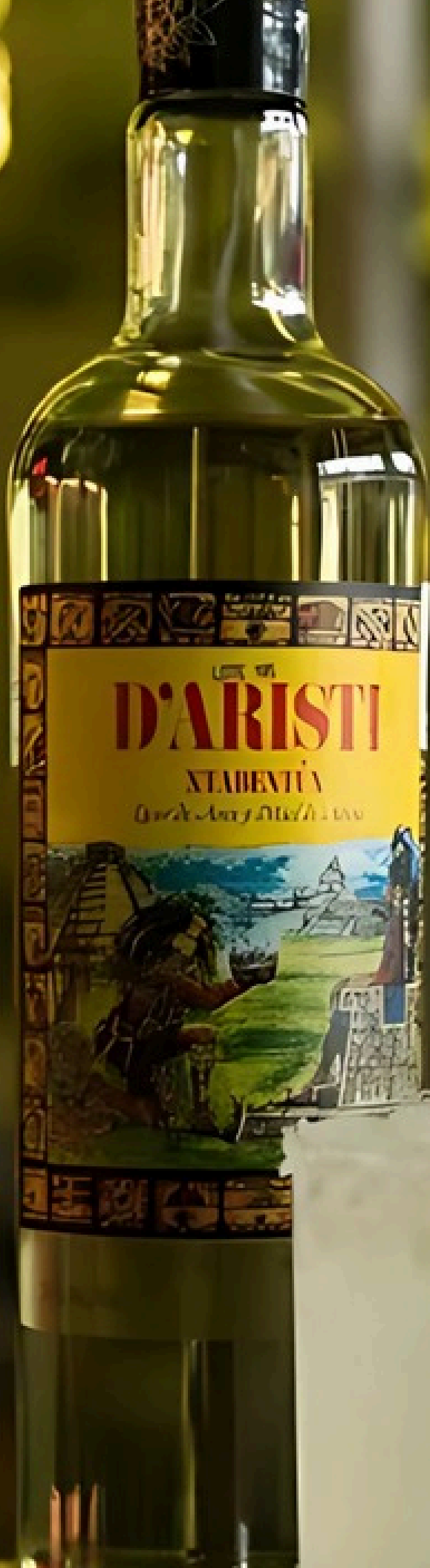


# XTABENTÚN

Xtabentún liquor has pre-Hispanic roots and is inspired by a Mayan ritual drink called balché, made from fermented tree bark and honey. After the arrival of the Spaniards, this recipe was transformed with the addition of anise and melipona bee honey, giving rise to the Xtabentún we know today.

It is a sweet-flavored and aromatic liquor, produced from honey made by bees that feed on the flower of the xtabentún plant, which has characteristics similar to anise. It is consumed as a digestive and can be served neat or on the rocks.

Its name comes from a wildflower that grows in Yucatán and is also linked to the legend of a mystical and seductive woman from Mayan folklore known as the Xtabay.



A glass of vibrant green Chaya Leaf Drink is the central focus. The drink is topped with a thick layer of white foam. It is garnished with a slice of lime and several fresh, bright green chaya leaves. The glass sits on a dark, textured surface. In the background, a blurred outdoor setting with a building and a flag is visible.

## CHAYA LEAF DRINK

This refreshing drink is made from one of the most important plants in Yucatecan cuisine, which, in addition to its delicious flavor, offers numerous health benefits.

Fun fact: Chaya was considered a sacred plant by the Maya and was believed to strengthen the blood and boost vital energy. Today, it is known to be rich in iron, calcium, and antioxidants—making it a true natural superfood.

In addition to being used for fresh beverages, chaya leaves are also incorporated into various traditional regional dishes such as tamales, soups, tortillas, and stews with eggs or squash—adding both flavor and nutrients to the cuisine of the Yucatán Peninsula.



# KAUA

ARTISAN TOWN







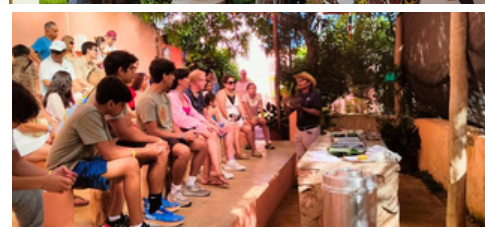
## ARTISAN TOWN

The charming town of Kaua, with deep Maya roots, is a cultural treasure where tradition and art are uniquely intertwined. 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 developed their own form of paper—amate by the Maya, 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 reflect not only the artistic skill of their creators but also a deep spiritual and symbolic connection to nature and the Mayan legacy. Visitors can purchase unique, handcrafted pieces—each one made with dedication and care.

The experience in Kaua is enriched by an immersion in culinary traditions, such as the preparation of cochinita pibil in the traditional pib, an ancestral cooking method that is part of the region's rich gastronomic heritage.

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. They enhance the flavors of traditional dishes and highlight the community's deep connection to its Mayan culture.





# VALLADOLID

## THE CAPITAL OF THE MAYAN EAST

Located in the eastern part of Yucatán, it was the setting for numerous rebellions and clashes between conquerors and Indigenous peoples. This historic site became an important political and religious center in the region.





# HIGHLIGHTS OF VALLADOLID

## CHURCH OF SAN CERVACIO

Built in 1545, it was demolished in 1705 after being desecrated during the "Crime of the Mayors." It was rebuilt in 1706, as we know it today, but with a significant difference: instead of facing west, like most colonial churches oriented toward Rome, this church was oriented toward the north.

## FORMER CONVENT OF SAN BERNARDINO DE SIENA

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







## CENTRAL PARK

Its cozy main park offers the refreshing shade of its laurels to both locals and visitors. In the evenings, the birdsong fills the air, signaling the end of the day. This place is perfect for a peaceful walk while enjoying the treats available, such as marquesitas, ice cream, churros, esquites, and more.

The park features several street vendor stalls run by locals, where you can savor a traditional marquesita with Edam cheese, buy handmade crafts, or enjoy a warm esquite while watching the colorful traditional dances performed on Sundays, all surrounded by the picturesque life of Valladolid.







## XOUL - ART AND MEZCAL

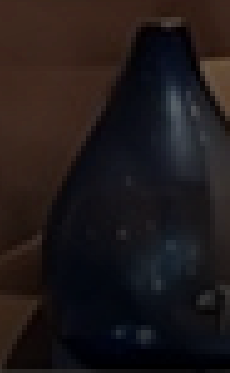
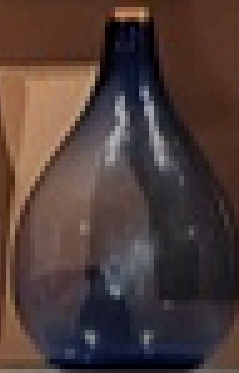
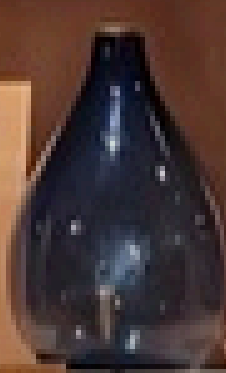
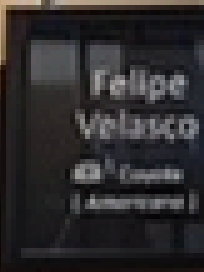
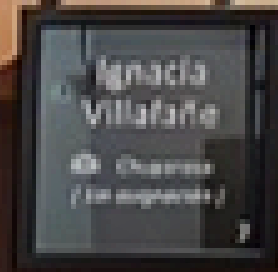
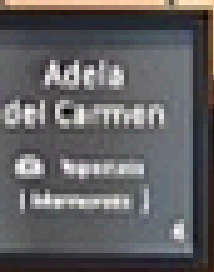
In the heart of Valladolid, Yucatán, Xoul Art & Mezcal is much more than a gallery: it is a sanctuary where Mexican folk art meets the soul of mezcal. Among alebrijes, ceramics, textiles, and other handcrafted pieces, this space celebrates the country's rich culture through a vibrant and deeply emotional curation.

The experience reaches its peak in their mezcalería, where mezcal is lived, felt, and contemplated. Here, mezcal is not just tasted—it is honored. Through their project Maestros del Maguey, Xoul pays tribute to the true artists of agave—the mezcal masters of Oaxaca—guardians of an ancestral tradition passed down through generations.

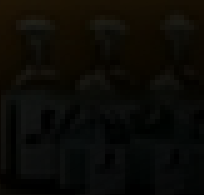
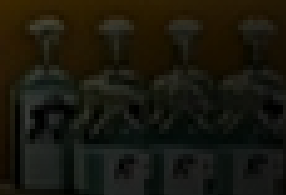
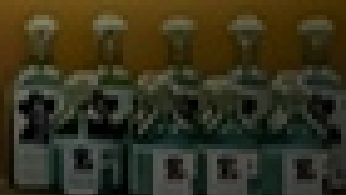




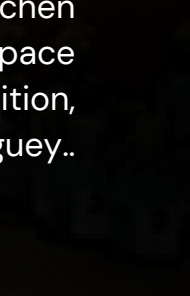
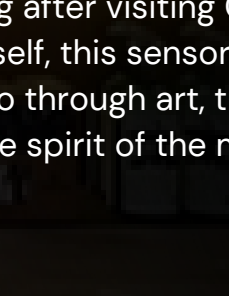
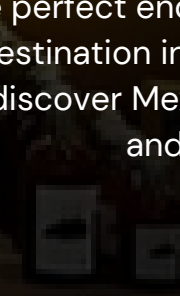
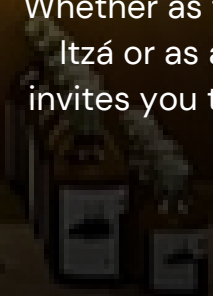
# MAESTROS SELECTOS



ENTRADA



Xoul Art & Mezcal is a must-visit stop for those seeking authenticity, beauty, and cultural depth. Whether as the perfect ending after visiting Chichén Itzá or as a destination in itself, this sensory space invites you to discover Mexico through art, tradition, and the spirit of the maguey..





**Thank you for choosing Mexico to create  
unforgettable memories with your family and  
friends.**

**We were delighted to accompany you on your  
journey and hope it was as enjoyable for you as it  
was for us.**

*Thank you*

**We have a gift for you!**



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