

# CHICHÉN ITZÁ



PUEBLOS MÁGICOS





# CHICHÉN ITZÁ

## WONDER OF THE MODERN WORLD

The city was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1988, and the Castillo de Kukulcán was named a New Wonder of the World in 2007.

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

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



## RECORD OF VISITORS

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



# THE HIGHLIGHTS



## CENOTE SAGRADO

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

## OBSERVATORY

Also known as "El Caracol," it is one of the few circular structures built by the Mayans, and it is believed to have been used for astronomical observations. It is constructed from 3 overlapping 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 you can see reliefs of warriors, eagles, and jaguars devouring human hearts. It consists of 4 platforms surrounded by 200 columns, all carved with images of Toltec warriors.

## THE GREAT BALL COURT

The ball court at Chichén Itzá is the largest of all in Mesoamerica, measuring 120 meters long and 30 meters wide. Its platforms rise to 8 meters high and extend 95 meters in length. There is a unique acoustic phenomenon in this field: if someone speaks in the temple at the southern end, the voice can be heard at the opposite end, as the sound reverberates along the walls of the northern temple.





## KUKULKÁN CASTLE

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

In 1997, studies conducted by the Universities of Minnesota and San Francisco revealed a hidden cenote beneath El Castillo. In 2015, the Geophysics Institute of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) performed magnetic resonance imaging, which graphically represented the cenote, hidden eight meters below the pyramid. In 2017, the research team of the Gran Acuífero Maya began exploring nearby caves to find an entrance to this body of water. However, the entrance was blocked by stones, likely placed there intentionally. It is believed that this cenote was kept hidden because it symbolized the center of the world.

## THE DESCENT OF KUKULKÁN

During the spring equinox, thousands of visitors gather to witness the natural light phenomena and the movements of shadows, particularly the serpent that descends step by step on the pyramid of El Castillo. The shadow effect created by the Maya reveals a 120-foot-long serpent that slithers down to join a massive serpent head at the base of the staircase. This spectacle showcases the astonishing precision of Maya astronomy, their impressive architecture, and their incredible knowledge of geometry.



Kukulkán descending the castle



# CENOTE CHICHIKÁN

"Great place surrounded by nature"

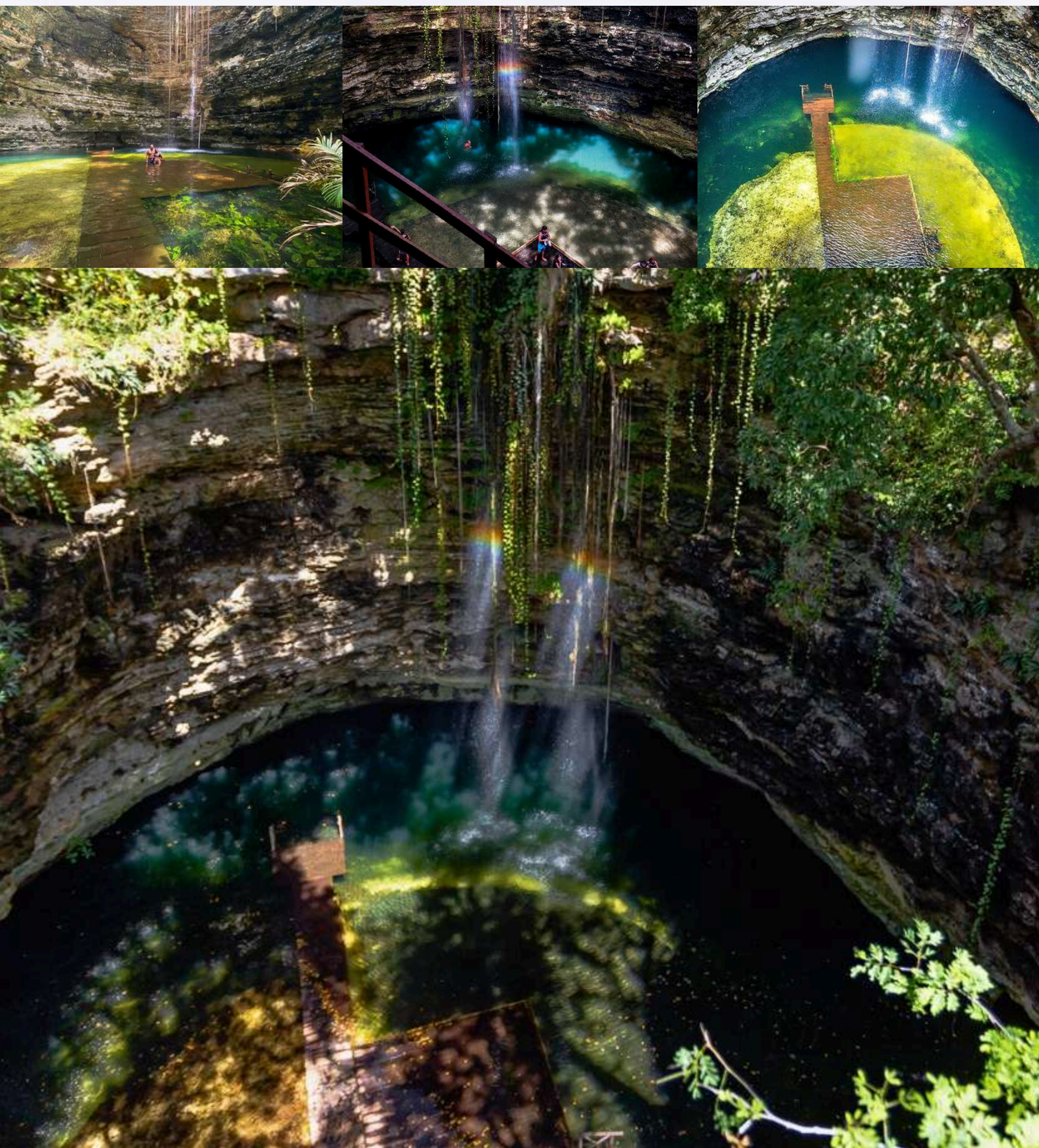




Let yourself be amazed by this incredible open cenote surrounded by limestone walls.

To reach it, you'll need to descend 24 meters below ground level using its wooden stairs. Its maximum depth is 8 meters, but you can easily explore it thanks to the central island, where you can walk, take photos, and easily access the water.

The icing on the cake that adds an even more magical touch is the waterfall and the beautiful rainbow it creates. Don't forget to capture it in your photos!





# MAYAN CUISINE







# CULINARY FOUNDATIONS

Traditional Yucatecan cuisine is a blend of ingredients used by the ancient Maya—primarily corn—and flavors brought by the Spaniards during the colonial period. The most commonly used seasonings and spices include pumpkin seeds, oregano, red onion, sour orange, sweet chili, lime, tomato, achiote, xcat chili, habanero chili, max chili, and cilantro. Yucatán was known as "the land of pheasant and deer" for using these species as main ingredients in its dishes. Today, they have been largely replaced by pork and turkey.

# TECHNIQUES

## CHAK, CHAKBIL O CHAKBIJ

This procedure involves cooking or blanching food in water seasoned with various condiments, which can include salt, pepper, garlic, and oregano. It is also called *\*ts'anchak\**, meaning cooked in water with little seasoning, derived from *\*ts'am\** (to soak) and *\*chak\** (to cook in water).

## POOK

Toasting

## CHUK

To roast over hot coals or charcoal.

## MUKTA'AN

To cook under ashes.

## BUTS'BIL

To smoke



## PIBIL

A hole is dug in the ground to serve as an oven (this type of oven is called a pib). The base is then filled with wood embers. On top of these, heated stone slabs are placed, and then the meat to be cooked is positioned on them.



# 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

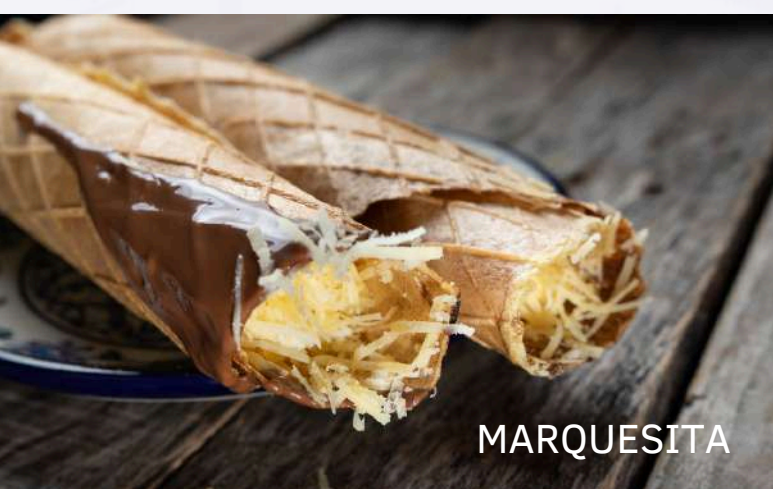
Some fruits and tubers (such as yuca and sweet potato) are cooked with cinnamon and piloncillo (unrefined cane sugar) to make this delicious dessert.

## 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



# 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.



# IZAMAL

THE CITY OF THREE CULTURES



Izamal is a beautiful colonial city founded on the ruins of an ancient Maya city. It is known as "The City of Three Cultures" because it combines elements of its pre-Hispanic past, the colonial period, and the present day.





Convento San antonio de padua

It derives its name from a mythical and wise figure assumed to be a teacher, master, and priest of the Maya, named Itzamná or Zamná, which means "Dew that descends from the sky."

Seven pyramids were erected in this place, and although the Spanish respected some temples, they used stones from the ancient buildings to construct new ones.

The Convent of San Antonio de Padua is one of the most important and majestic buildings in Mesoamerica. Its rectangular atrium, with 75 arches, covers an area of 7,806.43 square meters, slightly more than half of the total property. This makes it the largest enclosed atrium in the Americas and the second largest enclosed atrium in the world, after St. Peter's Square in the Vatican.

## VISIT OF POPE JUAN PABLO II

In 1993, Pope John Paul II visited Yucatán and met with six thousand people in Izamal, including indigenous groups.

May God bless Mexico! May God bless all the sons and daughters of this beloved nation! Praised be Jesus Christ.

- Farewell from Pope Juan Pablo II







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

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

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



*Thank you*