

CHIAPAS

SAN CRISTOBAL, PALENQUE & VILLAHERMOSA

JULY 2 – 11, 2010.

With **Wildwood Art Café**

Group Itinerary

Friday 2nd

Arrival to the airport of Tuxtla Gutierrez and transfer(s) to wonderful **Hotel Camino Real** in the city.

Time permitting, in the evening we will drive to the famous Marimba Park to hear the traditional concert & admire the locals dance to its rhythm.

Saturday 3rd

Breakfast in hotels every morning from 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Luggage outside the room by 8:00 a.m.

Depart 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This morning we will first drive near to the picturesque village of **Chiapa de Corzo** to enjoy a group boat trip to admire the grand “**Sumidero Canyon**”.

We will then penetrate into the traditional Maya World and drive to the beautiful City of San Cristobal de las Casas. In route we will stop to visit the pretty Mayan Tzotzil village of **Zinacantan**, famous for its fine flower weavings. We will visit their local church of San Lorenzo and then a local **Tzotzil** family that will show us their old fashioned weaving techniques as well as host us to a tasty lunch with hand made tortillas.

Afterwards, we will drive to check in to our beautiful **Hotel Casa Mexicana**, located in the heart of the historic district of the city.

At 5:45 p.m. we will walk from the hotel to visit the private **Textile Museum of Sergio Castro**, who is a philanthropist in the region and will give our group a lecture of the marvelous and vast textile history & symbolism of the Maya.

To end our day, we will enjoy a welcome cocktail followed by a festive group dinner with marimba music at the great ethnic restaurant **El Fogon de Jovel**.

B,L,D

Sunday 4th

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Today we will start the day with a nice walk visiting the beautiful church of **Santo Domingo**, followed by a walk to the **traditional Mercado/Market** of the city where you will see an amazing mix of goods from the region such as wool, peppers, fish,...etc sold indoors as well as outdoors. From there we will walk to the **Maya Centre for Traditional Medicine**, where we will have an introduction to the cultural & spiritual heritage of this region to enrich our understanding of present day Indian life.

Afterwards, we will visit the traditional village of **San Juan Chamula**, where we will admire their amazing & unique church, followed by some free time to wonder leisurely thru the village crafts area & town itself.

We will then stop for a festive Sunday lunch at the fabulous restaurant **Jardines de Chiapas**. And after we will visit the workshop and Museum of **Maestro Guadalupe Hermosillo** who makes the unique and beautiful **Iron Roof Crosses** that are so traditional to Chiapas.

At 6:00 p.m. we will drive near to visit an excellent local silversmith **Elizabeth Sanchez**, who makes her own beautiful and unusual designs using local gems. She will host us in her home & workshop for a cocktail and show us her work.

B,L(comida)

Monday 5th

8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Today we will drive deeper into the Maya mountains, into Tzotzil Indian territory to visit two great textile villages & its people. First we will drive to the village of **Chenalo**, to visit the family of **Manuela Perez Ruiz** who has organized the women weavers of her village into a small coop that produces all the local textiles in their region.

Afterwards we will drive to the village of **San Andres Larrainzar** first to visit with an exceptional Tzetzal weaver named **Fidencia Perez Hernandez** who will show us her family's extra fine embroidery techniques and use of natural dyes.

We will also visit a new and great village community coop where we will meet several of the Indian women weavers of these types of embroidery symbols.

We will return to the hotel to enjoy a light lunch and then at 3:30 p.m. we will walk nearby to visit the **Taller de Leñateros**, which is an artisan coop of Maya men and women who produce handmade paper, books, silk-screens and more. From there we will continue to visit the **Na Bolom Museum**, former home of **Trudi & Franz Bloom**, who spent their lives dedicated to the study of the **Lancandon Indians**.

We will have a private tour of the Museum with the curator and at the end we will be treated to a great group dinner in the Museum dining room.

B,L,D

Tuesday 6th

Today will be a free day to leisure on your own and pack!!!

At 2:00 p.m. we will walk nearby to enjoy a traditional Mexican “comida” at Restaurant **Continental**.

B,D(comida)

Wednesday 7th

Luggage out 6:45 a.m.

Depart 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Today we will leave the highlands and travel to the lowlands into Chol & Lacandon Indian territories to visit first the awesome Ancient Maya City of **Tonina**. After a rest and traditional lunch at the site restaurant called Rancho Tonina, we will continue our drive and now visit the unique **Agua Azul Water Falls**.

We will then drive to Palenque to check into the marvelous **Hotel Chan-Kah Resort** near the archaeological site.

Dinner will be in the hotel at 8 p.m.

B,L,D

Thursday 8th

9:00 a.m. – 3 p.m.

This entire morning we will dedicate to visit the amazing ancient city of **Lakam Ha**, better know as Palenque; one of the most breathtaking Mayan Kingdoms, including the new great Museum that has a marvelous collection of the latest discoveries.

We will enjoy lunch in town at a traditional restaurant **El Arbolito** and afterwards, the balance of the afternoon will be free to leisure. For those that wish we can drop you off back at the site for additional photos, a walk in the jungle and/or leisure and return later to pick you up and for the rest we will return to the hotel to rest, enjoy the pool and grounds.

This evening at 7:30 p.m. we will drive to the town of Palenque to enjoy dinner at the great local restaurant **Maya Cañada**.

B,L,D

Friday 9th

7:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Today we will drive towards the Guatemalan Frontier and into the **Maya Lacandon Rain Forest**. We will first see the amazing Maya Ancient City of **Bonampak**, famous for having the best preserved Mayan murals in Mexico.

Afterwards, we will drive near to the Lacandon village of **Lacanja**, where we will enjoy a group lunch followed by an optional walk into their jungle to see their water fall and/or have time to walk around the village and see the people as well as some of the bead work they do, using natural seeds.

B,L

Saturday 10th

Luggage out 7:00 a.m.

Depart 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Today we will drive to the city of Villahermosa and first visit the Archaeological **Olmec Park La Venta**.

Afterwards, we will drive a little further to visit a Cocoa plantation at the traditional **Hacienda Jesus Maria**. We will learn all about Cocoa & chocolate making as well as sample some of Mexico's most delicious natural chocolate!

We will enjoy a light lunch in the hacienda before driving back to the City to check in to the Hotel Camino Real Villahermosa to rest and enjoy the pool for the balance of the afternoon.

At 7:30 p.m. we will drive to the centre of town to enjoy a festive farewell group dinner in the great **Villahermosa Riviera Restaurant** overlooking the Grijalva River.

B,L,D

Sun 11th

Luggage out TBA

Depart TBA

Departure day, transfers to the airport of Villahermosa for flight back.

B

**Florencio L Moreno
Academic Tours Oaxaca
For Joan Griffith – Chiapas, 2010**