

FLAVOURS OF OAXACA



TOUR DETAILS		Duration
HIGHLIGHTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience real Oaxacan food• Visit unique site of Hierve El Agua• Prepare your own Oaxacan dishes• Discover the lovely Mixteca region• The ancient site of Monte Alban• The colonial charm of Oaxaca city• The colourful food market at Tlacolula• Learn from top Oaxacan chefs		9 days
Off The Beaten Track Rating	●●●●	Activity Rating ★★ ★

ITINERARY

DAY 1 Fly from Mexico City into Oaxaca. You will be met at the airport by a Travel The Unknown representative and brought to your hotel. Rest of the day free. Meal plan: N/A

DAY 2 Visit the colourful traditional food market at **Tlacolula**. Spend some time learning about Oaxacan ingredients and absorb the buzz of this lively market. Drive to the village of El Tule, where you will see the world's widest tree, a marvel that has drawn biologists. The trunk of this Montezuma Cypress has a circumference of 36.2m and is thought to be about 1500 years old. From here we visit **Caldo de Piedra**, a restaurant that specialises in a pre-Hispanic dish of Chinantec origin known as Caldo de Piedra or stone soup – made with shrimp, white fish, chilli, coriander (cilantro), shallots and water it is all cooked by adding a hot rock to the bowl. The dish is traditionally prepared by the men, and served to honoured guests. Return to Oaxaca mid-afternoon. Rest of the day free to relax. Overnight in Oaxaca. Meal plan: B, L

DAY 3 This morning we take a **cooking class with renowned Oaxacan chef Pilar Cabrera**. Take this opportunity to learn hands on about the complex cuisine of Oaxaca. Learn the secrets of a top quality molé, and when you are finished enjoy a delicious 5-course meal in a quaint secluded outdoor patio. In the afternoon take a short drive to **Monte Albán**, one of Mexico's most ancient and impressive archaeological sites - dating from as far back as 500BC. Overnight in Oaxaca. Meal plan: B, L

DAY 4 After breakfast drive to **Santiago Apoala** in the lovely Sierra Mixteca mountain range. Gentle hike through canyon to the village of Apoala, exploring the village (hike is optional). Next we visit **Doña Marina** in her house where you will **learn to make some local dishes**. Overnight in the comfortable log cabins of Apoala. Meal plan: B, L, D

Doña Marina is a good old soul of Santiago Apoala. She was born in this beautiful village but soon after her 12th birthday she was forced to leave for Oaxaca city to help her family to survive. She worked for many years - first in Oaxaca city, later in Mexico city - as a chef for well-to-do families. She is passionate about food and love to cook. Her family say that she is like an old cook book because she knows so many amazing traditional dishes using only simple ingredients. She cooks traditional food using seasonal products that she finds in her surrounding environment including Cactus flowers (a.k.a. Biznaga, February-March), agave flowers (grilled, steamed or pickled, April), watercress (July), a vast array of mushrooms (around September).

Her specialities include:

- "Amarillo" - a molé sauce made with chilli, guajillo capsicum and maize dough.

- "Atole blanco" - maize based drink, cooked, ground by hand, sieved and boiled.

- "Pinole" - a similar process to the "Atole blanco" but using toasted wheat instead of maize and adding chocolate.

DAY 5 After breakfast **optional hike to waterfall** with possibilities to swim. Or just enjoy the peaceful rural setting. We prepare lunch with Doña Marina before returning to Oaxaca. Rest of the day free. We recommend a visit to the Museum of Oaxacan Cultures. Overnight in Oaxaca. Meal plan: B, L

DAY 6 Morning free. **Visit Teotitlan for micro-finance tour**. This tour with our partners Envia (www.envia.org) will give you a real insight into the lives of local people in this traditional Zapotec village famous for its weaving traditions. This tour will directly fund small micro-finance projects which are small interest-free loans to help people to start or expand their businesses. You will visit people's homes and they will explain what they will do with the loan from their own



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homes or places of business. The benefits these small loans can bring to people is quite incredible and Envia will send you an update on the people who explained their projects once they have received their loans. Return to Oaxaca. Overnight in Oaxaca. Meal plan: B, L

DAY 7 **Cooking Class with famous chef José Luis Díaz.** José is the founder of the prestigious restaurant experience the **Culinary Theatre at the renowned Casa Crespo.** the main objective to promote only fresh seasonal products endemic to Oaxaca, making purchases in local markets, thus guaranteeing freshness and total quality in every dish. These are contemporary dishes made with traditional ingredients. The intention is to be playful, have fun and encourage creative cuisine. Late afternoon free in Oaxaca. Overnight in Oaxaca. Meal plan: B, L

DAY 8 After breakfast drive to the bizarre terrains and petrified waterfall of **Hierve el Agua.** Take a dip in the highly mineralised water admiring the stunning landscape. Next visit the ancient pyramid of **Mitla** and learn the fate of the other fifty one. **Lunch with Doña Chica** in Mitla, Doña Chica's molés are famous in Oaxaca and considered to be the best in the whole state. After lunch we will visit a mezcal factory, learn about the distillation process and sample a variety of mezcals with a variety of natural flavours across a range of ages. Return to Oaxaca. Overnight in Oaxaca. Meal plan: B, L

DAY 9 After breakfast drop to airport for return flight to Mexico City. Meal plan: B

PRICE INCLUDES

Return internal flights from Mexico City
Airport pick-up & drop-off
Ground transport

Accommodation
Entrance fees to sites on itinerary
Breakfasts and some meals (refer to itinerary for meal plan)

Drivers and English-speaking guides
Climate Care contribution

ABOUT OUR TRIPS

In addition to our scheduled group departures, **private and tailor-made trips** can be arranged that include some or all of the places on this itinerary. Please contact us with your requirements (e: info@traveltheunknown.com, t: 0845 053 0352) and we will happily put together an itinerary for you and your group. No trip is too long or too short.