An Art Lover’s MEXICO

Art, Archaeological & Architectural Treasures of Mexico City & Oaxaca

NOVEMBER 9–16, 2018
### Recommended Tour Dates: November 9–16, 2018

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*B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner, R = Reception*
Suggested Custom Itinerary

Friday, November 9

USA / Mexico City

• Fly to Mexico City.

• Transfer independently to the Four Seasons D.F., Mexico City’s most luxurious five-star hotel, ideally situated by the entrance of Chapultepec Park.

• In the late afternoon, gather in the hotel’s lobby and walk to the incomparable National Anthropology Museum, probably the crown jewel of all Latin American cultural institutions. Our guide will provide a whirlwind tour of the very best relics and artworks from the many civilizations that thrived in various parts of Mexico, including the Olmecs, Aztecs, Maya, and Zapotecs.

• Enjoy an elegant welcome dinner in the Four Season’s superb Zanaya restaurant on the private outdoor terrace. The food is mostly seafood from the state of Nayarit. The seasonings and the local “zarandeado” cooking style place this restaurant at the top of Mexico City’s list of best places to dine.

Four Seasons D.F. (Dinner)

Saturday, November 10

Mexico City’s Murals

• Spend the day with art expert Jay Oles viewing spectacular murals around Mexico City’s zócalo.

• In the morning see murals by José Clemente Orozco in Colegio de San Ildefonso. Then view murals by Diego Rivera in either the Ministry of Public Education or National Palace. (Note: the National Palace is often closed to the public.)

• Following a luncheon of Mexican specialties, visit the iconic Palacio de Correos, a dramatic building completed in 1907 in predominantly the Spanish Renaissance Revival style.

• Conclude your afternoon at the Museo de Bellas Artes to see one of the city’s most phenomenal Art Deco buildings, and see outstanding murals by David Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, and Rufino Tamayo. Particular focus will be given to the Tamayo murals since Smith College has Tamayo’s mural Nature and the Artist: the Work of Art and the Observer in the atrium of the Brown Fine Arts Center.

• Join an optional Dutch-treat dinner at a restaurant renowned for its cuisine from the nearby state of Puebla.

Four Seasons D.F. (Breakfast, Lunch)
Sunday, November 11

Art in Splendid Settings

• Drive to the Dolores Olmedo Museum to see an excellent collection of works by Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in a magnificent hacienda setting, bequeathed by former Mexican businesswoman Dolores Olmedo.

• Enjoy a festive luncheon of traditional home cooking at the Casa Pedregal, a privately-owned house designed by notable Mexican architect Luis Barragán, which is owned by an eclectic modern art collector. An outstanding collection of Barragán furniture is on-site.

• Continue to Frida Kahlo’s Blue House in Coyoacán, a historic house museum and art museum dedicated to the life and work of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. The building was the birthplace of Kahlo and is also the home where she grew up, lived with her husband Diego Rivera for a number of years, and eventually died, in one of the rooms on the upper floor. In 1958, Diego Rivera donated the home and its contents in order to turn it into a museum in Frida’s honor. The museum contains a collection of artwork by Kahlo, Rivera, and other artists along with the couple’s Mexican folk art, pre-Hispanic artifacts, photographs, memorabilia, and personal items displayed in the rooms of the house, which remains much as it was in the 1950s.

• Stop at the Camino Real in Polanco to see its famous large-scale painting El Hombre Frente al Infinito by Rufino Tamayo, the same artist who painted the mural in the atrium of the Brown Fine Arts Center. Enjoy a cocktail in the hotel’s memorable Blue Bar, which was designed by internationally acclaimed modern Mexican architect Ricardo Legoretta.

• The evening is at leisure.

Camino Real Polanco (Breakfast, Lunch, Cocktail)

Monday, November 12

Mexico City / Oaxaca

• Following breakfast, check out of your hotel.

• Depart the hotel by private motor coach for a short drive to the beautiful apartment of local artist Gabriel de la Mora, one of Mexico’s most prominent emerging artists.

• Proceed to his studio and learn about Gabriel’s meticulous process of researching, collecting, classifying, cataloguing a range of quotidian objects that have been discarded, and manipulating them into new geometric entireties.

• Enjoy a coffee break hosted by the gallery director of Proyectos Monclava Gallery. Then take a guided tour of the Proyectos Monclava Gallery and discover how the gallery evolved from its establishment in 2005 as an experimental platform for emerging artists to one of the most important forums for contemporary art in Mexico.

• Following lunch in a beautiful restaurant, proceed to the airport for a non-stop, hour-long flight to Oaxaca.
• Drive to La Quinta Real, and check into your room.
• At 7:00 pm, get a short orientation tour of the area near your hotel as you walk to dinner at La Catedral. Then savor a delicious dinner under the stars in one of the restaurant’s lovely colonial patios.

Quinta Real (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Tuesday, November 13

Oaxaca

• Familiarize yourself with the city of Oaxaca, known for the beauty of its architecture, richness of culture, and soft temperate climate.
• Begin at the Santo Domingo Church, celebrated as one of Mexico’s great art treasures. Begun in 1552 by the Dominican order, the church’s severe façade contrasts the exuberant baroque interior.
• Next, take a guided tour of the Oaxacan Cultures Museum, located in the Santo Domingo ex-convent. This museum houses a vast collection of historical, archaeological, and ethnographic objects, and features over 500 objects of gold, jade, amber, and silver excavated from Tomb Seven at Monte Albán.
• Walk to Ex-convento de San Pablo, one of the newest cultural attractions in Oaxaca, funded by philanthropist Alfredo Harp Helú, who restored parts of a church and built a beautiful multistory learning center and textile museum.
• Following a gourmet luncheon of local specialties, meander through the festive zócalo.
• In the afternoon visit the Museo Rufino Tamayo, donated to Oaxaca by the artist Rufino Tamayo. This museum contains the personal collection of the artist, including almost a thousand priceless artifacts representing the artistic developments of the pre-Hispanic era.
• Take taxis to the home of Smith alumna Margaret (Margie) Barclay ’64 for a reception, possibly attended by Smith alumna Cecily Winters, who also resides in Oaxaca.

Quinta Real (Breakfast, Lunch, Reception)

Wednesday, November 14

Monte Albán and Atzompa

• Spend a full morning exploring the dramatic archaeological site of Monte Albán. This capital city of the Zapotec nation was an important ceremonial center and one of the largest Meso-American cities at its peak. Learn about this ancient civilization, which existed from approximately 500 BC to AD 750, through the remains of its great square, palaces, temples, tombs, and ball court.
• Following a simple but delicious lunch, visit the paper workshop created by renowned artist Francisco Toledo.
• Return to Oaxaca in the mid-afternoon, and enjoy free time.
• This evening, visit Arte de Oaxaca, the gallery that represents Rodolfo Morales, an internationally celebrated artist who dedicated his resources to restoring his hometown of Ocotlán, which is situated near Oaxaca.

• Join an optional Dutch-treat dinner in a nearby restaurant.

_Quinta Real (Breakfast, Lunch)_

**Thursday, November 15**

**Oaxaca and Mitla**

• Visit the archaeological site of Mitla, an important Mixtec ceremonial center comprising various palaces, central squares, and beautiful tombs for royalty and holy men. (The name Mitla is derived from older words associated with the underworld and the dead.) A major focus of this site is the unique designs, mostly variations of a geometric fretwork, used to decorate the palace walls and other buildings.

• At the nearby textile market, examine the handwoven jackets, tablecloths, and bed covers that are decorated with the ancient designs found at Mitla.

• Continue to Teotitlán del Valle, a Zapotec village famous for its weaving techniques and colors created by hand-gathered natural ingredients for their dyes.

• Join a family of local weavers who will host a luncheon of regional specialties, and then, observe the carding, spinning, and dyeing of natural wool, as well as the weaving of the wool on treadle looms.

• Return to Oaxaca in the afternoon.

• This evening, bid _adiós_ to Oaxaca during a farewell dinner in a memorable location.

_Quinta Real (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)_

**Friday, November 16**

**Oaxaca / USA**

• Following breakfast, transfer to the airport for independent flights back to the United States.

(B)