

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: MEXICO



TRIP CODE:
TMUEB3

TOPDECKER, meet Latin America (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. Thought Mexico was all sun-kissed beaches, tacos and drinking fruity cocktails from a bucket? Well yeah, there's that. But the REAL Mexico – filled with looming temples, fascinating culture, otherworldly natural wonders and ancient Mayan heritage – that's the one you'll find here. Want all the swim stops, mouth-watering cuisine, awe-inspiring scenery and adventure-filled activities – plus plenty of free time to do your own thing? This is it.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Ferry to Isla Holbox
- Three Islands boat tour
- Local cookery demonstration
- Ferry to Chiquilá
- Tour of Chichén Itzá with Trip Leader
- Visit Cenote San Ignacio
- Visit Fort San Miguel
- Visit Palenque archaeological site
- Visit to Cascada de Roberto Barrios
- Visit Becán archaeological site
- Visit Bacalar Lagoon
- Tour of Tulum archaeological site with Trip Leader

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Cancun
Mexico

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Playa del Carmen
Mexico

TRIP CURRENCIES

- Mexico - MXN

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | CANCÚN (MEXICO)

¡Bienvenido a México! First: say hola to the small bunch of explorers sharing the adventure. Then: it's our first included group dinner – time to tuck into authentic Mexican eats. But, actually IN Mexico. Sh*t's got wild. Ready to meet the locals? Say yes to culture? Yes to history? Yes to the new and the exotic? You're in EXACTLY the right place.



MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 2 | CANCÚN – ISLA HOLBOX

Wave adiós to Cancún – after brekkie we're making tracks for Isla Holbox ('ole-bosh'). This car-free island is an absolute mood: think sun-bleached beaches and emerald waters so dreamy even the Little Mermaid would want to stay here. And the best way to soak it all up? An included boat tour around the islands, obvs. Float through Yalahau Lagoon and try spot the resident iguanas, crocodiles, flamingos and dolphins. Take a dip at Yala-Hau, where legend has it the fresh water will make you feel 10 years younger (ready to re-live those awkward early teens?). And chill amid the tropical vibes of Passion Island. The day's not done yet. Swap chillin' for choppin' at a local restaurant for a chef's masterclass in Mexican dips. Avocados WILL be harmed in the process.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Ferry to Isla Holbox
- Three Islands boat tour
- Local cookery demonstration

DAY 3 | ISLA HOLBOX

What's that? A free day to explore paradise? Oh, go on then. Hunt down some mouthwatering marquesitas – crispy crepes filled with chocolate, jam or cheese. Three of each, pls. Stroll through the rustic thatched buildings and colourful street art of charming AF Holbox village. Or head to Punta Coco Beach for an afternoon lounging in hammocks and making sand angels. This is your chance to unplug and embrace the slow pace the locals love so much.



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 4 | ISLA HOLBOX – CHICHÉN ITZÁ – MÉRIDA

Act cool: today we're leaving island life behind and heading to one of the New Seven Wonders of the World – Chichén Itzá. Our Trip Leader will show us the ins and outs of this iconic complex of ancient Mayan ruins, ticking off the likes of the Temple of Kukulcan ('El Castillo'), the Platform of the Skulls, the Plaza of a Thousand Columns and the Sacred Cenote. Back in the present, next we've got our sights set on Mérida – the buzzing capital of Yucatán. A city steeped in colonial and Mayan heritage, here the evening's yours for exploring. Make a beeline for Hidalgo Square's lively café and bar scene. Or seek out Parque Santa Lucía to catch some local music (and flowery costumes). Later, gather your trip mates and track down a plate of mukbil pollo aka 'buried chicken' – traditionally offered to deceased relatives on Day of the Dead. But also tasty for the living.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Ferry to Chiquilá
- Tour of Chichén Itzá with Trip Leader

DAY 5 | MÉRIDA – CENOTE SAN IGNACIO – CAMPECHE

You picked this trip specially for its out-of-this-world experiences, right? Well: here's another. First up today, the Cenote (that's 'sinkhole' to you and me) San Ignacio – a stalactite-filled cave complete with a crystal-clear natural pool. Float gracefully (read: doggy paddle) in the sparkling turquoise water before an included traditional Yucatán lunch. And then? Onwards to the walled port city of Campeche for more colonial architecture, Mayan history and bonus pirate legends. This evening: engage explorer mode, get lost in a maze of pastel-coloured streets, and snack yourself silly on coconut shrimp and salsa. Mmm...



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Cenote San Ignacio

DAY 6 | CAMPECHE – PALENQUE

Leave Percy the parrot in the coach – there's a strict no-pirate rule this morning. We're off to Fort San Miguel, built in the late 18th century to keep the seafaring baddies out of the city. After we've roamed the ramparts and checked the canons with our fact-filled Trip Leader, it's on to the ancient city of Palenque. Here the evening's yours for the taking, so swing by a not-so-ancient local eatery and spice up your life with a fill of tacos, tortillas and tamales. Yes. Please.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Fort San Miguel

DAY 7 | PALENQUE

Want the kind of mind-blowingly awesome archeological site that Indiana Jones WISHES he'd been to? Enter: Palenque. Not to boast, but the ruins of this ancient Mayan city are some of the most impressive in the world. Nestled in thick, misty jungle, this incredible complex was built without metal tools or even the wheel (WTF, right?), and the grey stone would have been painted flashy red, blue and yellow. Gawp at the remains of The Palace and brush up on your hieroglyphs at the 7th-century Temple of the Inscriptions. Then: prepare to get the blues in the best possible way at the dazzling Cascada de Roberto Barrios waterfall, where there's time for a dip in the azure waters. And later? Another included group dinner at a local restaurant's on the cards. This day in one word = epic.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Palenque archaeological site
- Visit to Cascada de Roberto Barrios

DAY 8 | PALENQUE – BECÁN – BACALAR

Tums filled after another group breakfast, this morning we're jumping back on the coach and setting course for the beaut lakefront town of Bacalar. But first: we're stormin' Becán archaeological site. Make sure those combat boots are laced up tight. You never know what mystery lurks within these ancient walls... Later, when we roll into Bacalar the evening is free for doing your own sweet thing. Want local recommendations? Your expert Trip Leader's got your back. Rather see where the night takes you? You got it. Either way, you can't miss the stunning 'Lagoon of Seven Colours' running along the town. Spoiler: all the colours are blue. But you're still gonna love it.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Becán archaeological site

DAY 9 | BACALAR – TULUM – PLAYA DEL CARMEN

Ready for bluer than blue scenes? Obvs. This morning we're discovering a more remote part of Bacalar Lagoon. Expect: shimmering swim stops and seasonal snacks. Forget: filters and fakery. Then, we're heading north to one of the last cities built by the Mayans. Discover the who's who of Tulum with a guided tour – including the pyramid temple of El Castillo, the Temple of the Frescoes and the Templo Dios del Viento. Google it and get excited. Finally, we'll end the day in Playa del Carmen, where you're free to explore the vibrant 5th Avenue or chill with the palm trees along the beach. These guys are living the dream.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Bacalar Lagoon
- Tour of Tulum archaeological site with Trip Leader

DAY 10 | PLAYA DEL CARMEN

White sands. Aquamarine water. Gently swaying trees. Hear that? It's the sound of our last day together (and waves crashing). When you've finished siesta-ing on the beach, there are plenty of local bars to pull up a pew. If you're keen to delve a bit deeper, take up the offer of a Sian Ka'an biosphere reserve tour – perfect for David Attenborough wannabes. Opt for a visit to the magical Rio Secreto caves and underground river. Hang with the sea turtles in Akumal. Or go all out with a fancy catamaran and snorkelling tour around the jaw-dropping Riviera Maya coastline. Tonight, it's time for one last fiesta with the gang. Salud to this adventure of a lifetime!



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Sian Ka'an biosphere reserve tour: from 199 USD
- Rio Secreto cave tour: from 129 USD
- Snorkelling with sea turtles in Akumal: from 89 USD
- Riviera Maya catamaran and snorkelling tour: from 129 USD

DAY 11 | PLAYA DEL CARMEN

You came. You saw. You cultured. Wash the salt from your hair and shake the sand from your undies. It's time to say so long to Mexico – and your trip mates. But who says the fun has to stop now? We're booking the next flight to LA... coming?



MEALS:

- Breakfast

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!