**Mexico City: Politics, Culture and Cuisine**

**NOVEMBER 1–6, 2021**

Join us on our inaugural visit to one of the world’s most dynamic cities, Mexico City. Filled with world-class museums, stunning modernist architecture, delicious food, and art-filled spaces, the city has enjoyed a renaissance in recent years.

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**NOVEMBER 1**

- Depart on independent flights to Mexico City. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred to the **Sheraton Maria Isabel Hotel**, located in the heart of the exclusive Paseo de la Reforma.

- Late this afternoon meet with journalist **Marcela Turati** who has been covering the Mexican drug war for over 10 years, along with issues of poverty and social movements, for leading Mexican newspapers **Reforma** and **Excelsior**. She is also a founding member of Quinto Elemento Lab, non-profit organization that seeks to encourage and conduct investigative reporting to build a more just and transparent society. Marcela will address the issue of disappearances related to cartel activity. As of 2019, there were 40,000 missing or disappeared people in Mexico.

- Early evening visit **Galería Casa Lamm**. The Casa Lamm Cultural Center is one of the best known landmark in Colonia Roma. It was a house built in the early 20th century when Colonia Roma was a new neighborhood for the wealthy leaving the historic center of Mexico City. The house was restored to open as a cultural center in 1994, with the aim of making the area a center for the visual arts. Meet with **Dyan del Rivero Teran**, who is in charge of special projects at the center.

- Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening at **Nueve Nueve**, located inside the center.
NOVEMBER 2

**B, L, D**

- Today is Day of the Dead. There may be minor adjustments to the day in order to take advantage of the festivities. One of the biggest traditions of the holiday is to visit grave sites of relatives and decorate them with colorful flowers, food, pictures, candy, and even music. An optional cemetery visit will be offered to those who are interested in witnessing this celebration.

- Meet with staff at Miguel Agustin Pro Juarez Centre for Human Rights (Centro Prodh), a non-profit civil association working to promote structural changes in order to achieve human rights in Mexico. Since 1988 they have been working with excluded, vulnerable and disenfranchised groups, including indigenous people, women, migrants and victims of social repression, with a special focus on gender-based violence which is widespread in Mexico.

- Later meet with Paulina Parlange at the ColorIndio studio. Colorindio began in 2009 when Paulina Parlange and her business partner Libia Moreno took a trip through Mexico to bring together women weavers from multiple communities. Their focus was to encourage the women to use techniques that have been passed down for generations to create modern looking textiles.

- Continue on to the Museo de Arte Popular. This folk art museum is a wonderful space to get acquainted with the diversity of Mexican craftsmanship.

- Enjoy a simple lunch at Sin Nombre.

- After lunch visit the Palacio de Bellas Artes. Construction of this iconic building began in 1905 by Italian architect Adamo Boari and was completed after the Mexican Revolution by architect Fredrico Mariscal, utilizing the more modern art deco style, which is still prominent today. Spend some time viewing the immense murals by world-famous Mexican artists, such as, Rufino Tamayo and Diego Rivera.

- Close by is city’s historical core where we will enjoy a walking tour of the city’s foundations and colonial past. See the exterior of Templo Mayor, an ancient Aztec site that was believed to be, literally, the center of the universe.

- See La Casa de los Azulejos (Tile House), a beautiful 18th-century Baroque palace covered in blue and white tile from the state of Puebla.

- Visit the Department of Education where Diego Rivera worked with assistants from 1923 to 1928 to create 125 panels that would help define a new nation after the 1910 revolution. The idea for the murals was to bring together the various post-war factions and shape a national identity that would recognize its indigenous roots, valuing the work of the peasant, the common man.

- Stop at the Plaza de la Constitución, also known as Zócalo. This square was the center of Tenochtitlan before the arrival of the Spanish conquerors, and today is one of the world’s largest city squares. Here you can see the Catedral Metropolitana, the first and largest cathedral in the Americas.

- Dinner tonight is at Limosneros where we will enjoy a six course taco tasting menu.

NOVEMBER 3

**B, L**

- After breakfast meet with Madeleine Wattenbarger, a journalist based in Mexico City, who covers human rights, migration, politics, and culture. Her work has appeared in The Nation, Vice, The Guardian and Al Jazeera. Before becoming a freelance journalist, Wattenbarger worked with asylum seekers in Mexico.
• Continue on to the **Museo Nacional de Antropologia.** Situated within the lush surroundings of Bosque de Chapultepec, the museum has a massive Mesoamerican artifact collection and today we will concentrate on the Aztec and Mayan halls, which contain world-famous pieces from Mexico’s pre-Hispanic period.

• Enjoy lunch at the simple but wonderful **Martina Fonda Fina.** The dishes change daily and are prepared with fresh, locally sourced ingredients.

• In 2018, the first leftist president in Mexico’s modern history took office. The victory of **Andrés Manuel López Obrador,** commonly referred to as AMLO in Mexico, swept aside a long-standing political establishment in a society where most politicians are seen as corrupt and detached from the reality of ordinary citizens. This afternoon we will meet with experts to review the success and problems facing the country in 2021.

• Optional stop at the **Ciudadel Market,** a traditional style Mexican market, with about 350 stands, which specializes in the sale of Mexican handicrafts and folk art. It was established in 1968 just before the Summer Olympics to showcase Mexico’s cultural heritage.

• Dinner this evening is at leisure.

**NOVEMBER 4**

• Depart the hotel and drive to the campus of the **National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM),** which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2007. The campus design incorporates green spaces and large open-air plazas as well as several museums, a stadium, an ecologcal reserve and botanical garden, making it a beautiful spot to spend a day. We will tour the campus and learn more about its innovative design and see murals by Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros and other celebrated Mexican artists.

• Continue on to **Casa Pedregal.** Designed by Luis Barragán this is one of the greatest Modernist masterpieces of Mexico. It served as the canvas for an ambitious modernist urbanization project, in which Barragán and his contemporaries sought to develop the area while preserving the integrity of its unique ecosystem.

• Enjoy lunch next door at a restaurant and community center called **Tetetlán.** The dining room’s new glass floor exposes layers of petrified lava, and opens into a kitchen that produces artful Mesoamerican cuisine.

• After lunch visit the offices of **Transparencia Mexican** to meet with staff. Bribery, embezzlement and procurement corruption are all common practices in Mexican public service. Their work focuses on tackling the bribery issues, which are widely seen in Mexico as among the gravest threats to the country’s evolving democracy and economic growth.

• Continue on to enjoy a walking tour of **Coyoacán.** Coyoacán’s main plaza, cobblestoned and plant-filled, is divided in halves, called Jardín Centenario and Jardín Hidalgo. They form a typical colonial Mexican town square, complete with benches for people-watching, gazebos for music and vendors selling balloons, toys and traditional sweets. At the eastern side sits the church of **San Juan Bautista,** a highly gilded baroque affair. Across the plaza to the left of the church is the **Casa de Cortés,** a large yellow edifice, which occupies the site of Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés’s 16th-century country home.

• Located in the area is birthplace and final residence of Frida Kahlo, now known as the **Museo Casa Azul.** Preserved in the home are the personal objects that reveal the private universe of Latin America’s most celebrated woman artist.

• A short walk from the Casa Azul is the home where **Leon Trotsky** lived – and was killed with an ice-pick. The house has been preserved in detail: Trotsky’s bathrobe still hangs on the hook where he left it.

• End the afternoon discussing immigration issues with staff at **Sin Fronteras (Without Borders),** one of the leading Mexican civil society organizations specializing on migrant issues.

• Return to **Coyoacán** and enjoy dinner at a fabulous local restaurant offering views of the Plaza which, in the evening, becomes a gathering point for the community and a life-force of its own.

**Scheduled events and their timing are subject to change**
**NOVEMBER 5**

- Depart early for a visit to **Teotihuacán**, a large and majestic archaeological site located about 25 miles north of Mexico City. It is famous for its large pyramids dedicated to the sun and the moon, but the site also contains beautiful murals and carvings and several museums through which you can explore the city’s fascinating history. This is one of the largest and most important archaeological sites in Mexico.

- Construction at Teotihuacan began around 200 BC. At its peak between 300 and 600 CE, this was one of the biggest cities in the world, with around 200,000 inhabitants. The Aztecs considered Teotihuacan a sacred site even though it had been abandoned long before their time. Teotihuacan is the name that was given to the site by the Aztecs and it means “city of the gods” or “where men become gods.”

- Return to Mexico City for lunch.

- After lunch meet with artist **Pedro Reyes**, a pacifist who uses art to challenge gun culture in Mexico. He works in a variety of media and techniques to create large (and small) scale projects intended to “take existing social problems and imagine solutions for a happier world.” This has included 2008’s *Palas por Pistolas*, where he melted guns into shovels with the goal of using them to plant trees around the world.

- Enjoy some free time before a farewell dinner this evening.

**NOVEMBER 6**

- Return home or enjoy a two day extension to Oaxaca.

**OPTIONAL POST-TOUR EXTENSION TO OAXACA**

Take a short flight to Oaxaca, a vibrant colonial city recognized as a UNESCO world heritage site with some of the richest and strongest traditions in Mexico. It’s well known for cultural arts, Pre-Columbian ruins and a long history of traditional crafts. Explore markets, museums and cultural centers as we meet with local craftspeople. Oaxaca’s famed creativity extends to the food scene and there will be ample opportunity to sample its diverse cuisine which boasts the rarest varieties of corn in the entire country. **Hotel**: Quinta Real Oaxaca.

*See Oaxaca extension sheet for complete details.*
WHAT IS INCLUDED?

PRICING

DOUBLE (per person): $3,995
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: $750

*Rates are based on standard accommodations. Suites, superior rooms and other upgrades carry an additional fee.

INCLUDED

- Accommodation, based on double occupancy, as listed
- Airport transfers on designated arrival and departure dates
- Meals as listed in the itinerary
- Bottled water on the bus
- All sightseeing and excursions in a private air-conditioned bus
- Headsets for listening to guides on-site
- All private events and speakers as listed
- Services of an English-speaking local guide/tour manager who will travel with the group throughout the program
- All gratuities
- Welcome and farewell receptions

NOT INCLUDED

- Airfare to/from Mexico
- Luggage charges
- Drinks at included lunches and dinners, excluding welcome and farewell receptions
- Passport fees
- Travel insurance
- Items of a purely personal nature
- Any item not listed

The Nation purchases carbon offsets to cover the emissions generated by our travel program in order to help mitigate effects on the climate.