



Yincat on

GOTTA LUV TRAVEL, LLC



HISTORY

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Mayans flourished and established one of their greatest cities, Chichén Itzá, in what is now Yucatán. Because it was relatively isolated from the rest of Mexico until recently, the state developed its own unique culture. Today, service-based companies account for about 23% of the state's economy. Trade activities (agribusiness, textile and apparel production, furniture manufacturing, etc.) represent about 21% of the economy, followed by finance and insurance at 19%, manufacturing at 13%, transportation and communications at 10%, agriculture and livestock at 7%, construction at 6%, and mining at 1%.

In the Beginning

One of the most advanced indigenous cultures of the ancient Americas, the Mayans began as hunter-gatherers and migrated into the Yucatán around 2500 B.C. During the pre-classic period (500 B.C.–250 A.D.) they appeared in Quintana Roo, where they established ceremonial centers at Coba, Dzibanche and Kohunlich. Quintana Roo was considered to be the gateway to the Mayan world. Between 300 and 900, the Mayans built several cities in the Yucatán region, two of the most spectacular being Chichén Itzá and Uxmal.

Jacinto Canek

Jacinto Canek, a Maya who led an Indian uprising in Yucatán. Born Jacinto Uc de Los Santos, this Indian from Campeche led a Maya cultural revitalization movement that ultimately challenged Spanish rule in colonial Yucatán. In 1761, in the village of Cisteíl, he proclaimed himself to be King Canek (the legendary name of Maya kings), whose coming had been foretold in Maya prophecy. Thousands of Indians joined his movement, which combined traditional Maya and Christian elements and sought both cultural and political autonomy. The Spanish colonial authorities, using their military might, finally defeated Canek's forces in battle, thus crushing the movement. Canek was captured, tried, and executed by being torn limb-from-limb.

The Talking Cross

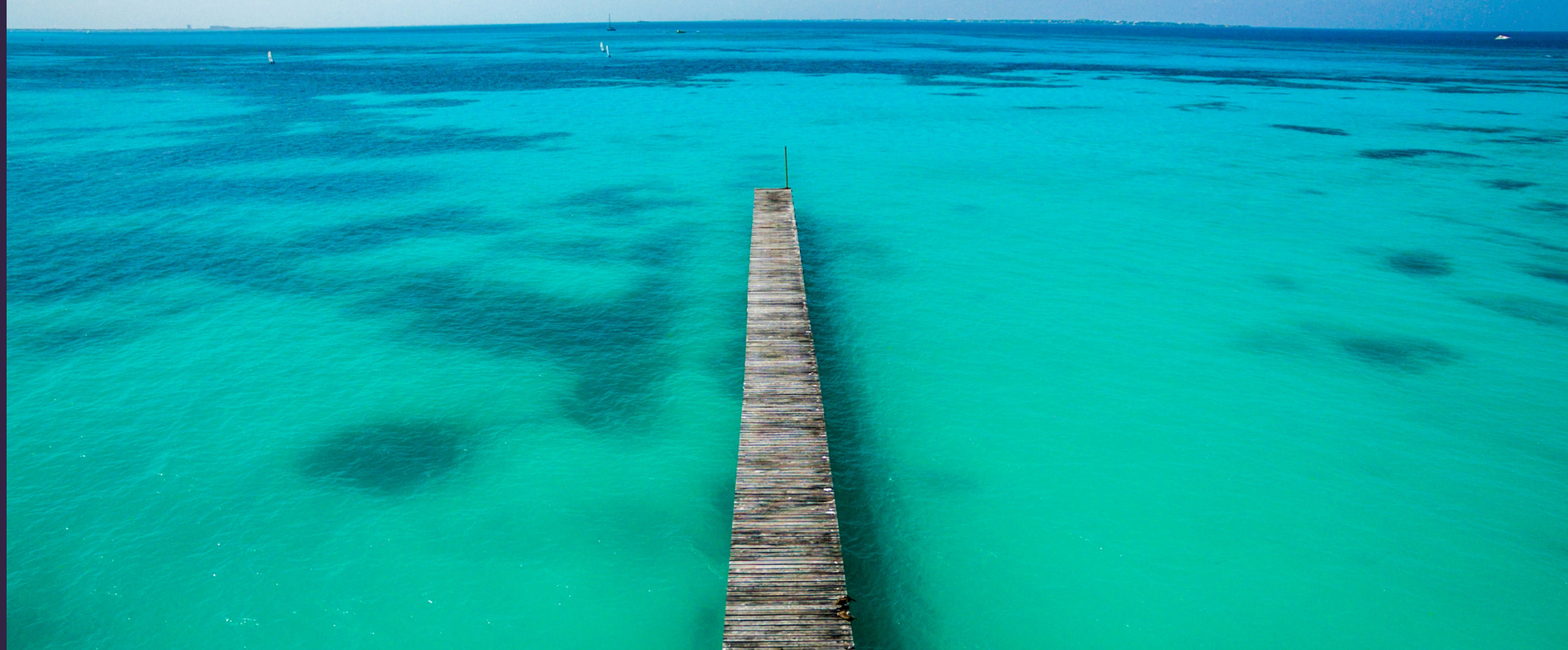
After Mexican independence in 1821, a long struggle fueled by the Mexican government under the dictatorship of Santa Anna Federalists against Centralists ensued. Yucatan rebelled against the new sovereign and declared independence in 1841. The Caste War brought aid to the Mexican federal government, which became to formable an opponent for the Yucatan liberators and Yucatan was reunited with Mexico in 1848. In 1847 after years of suffering, yet another Mayan village was destroyed. Tepich laid waste and its people massacred. This intensified the Mayans resolve to fight back and reclaim their ancestral lands and gain autonomy for themselves. The Caste War escalated and it was during this period that a miracle occurred to a group of Mayans camping at a cenote in Kampocolche. A small cross miraculously spoke to the people.

The “small sacred cross” became “Chan Santa Cruz” and its notoriety quickly spread amongst the people. A Temple, the Balam Na, was constructed in its honor and soon living quarters and barracks were built around the Temple. Here lived the Mayan High Elders as well as the “Tata Polin”, the interpreter of the Talking Cross. By 1901 federal troops had occupied the town and the Maya Rebels had withdrawn deep into the jungle. The Temple was destroyed and its rocks used to build a Catholic Church.



MONEY

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The national currency of Mexico is the Mexican Nuevo Peso, also simply called a peso. Paper currency comes in denominations of 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 pesos. Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, and 20 pesos, and 20 and 50 centavos (100 centavos = 1 peso).

Credit Cards

Larger stores and businesses, as well as those geared towards the massive tourism industry in Cancún, accept credit cards. Small businesses and locally owned restaurants usually do not accept credit cards.

Debit Cards

Many businesses take debit cards as well, but you'll usually wind up paying the card issuer a 3% international transaction fee. Some credit cards tack on international surcharges, too.



Visitors from the USA

The rate of exchange is floating and fluctuates frequently. U.S. dollars are widely accepted in Cancún and frequently accepted elsewhere. But it is best to use pesos since locals will charge more – sometimes up to double – for goods and services paid for in dollars. U.S. dollars are relatively easy to change into pesos due to the stability of the U.S. economy and The States' geographic proximity to Mexico.

ATM

ATMs (Caja Permanente or automático) are plentiful in Yucatán and are the easiest source of cash, though a few tourist areas (like Río Lagartos and surrounds) still remain without. You can use major credit cards and some bank cards, such as those on the Cirrus and Plus systems, to withdraw pesos (or dollars) from ATMs. The exchange rate that banks use for ATM withdrawals is normally better than the ‘tourist rate’ – though that advantage is negated by transaction fees and other methods that banks have of taking your money. Use ATMs during daylight hours, and whenever possible, in secure indoor locations.

HELPFUL INFO

Climate

The Yucatan Peninsula, which includes the Mexican states of Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo, but also a part of Belize and Guatemala, has a tropical climate, with a rainy and muggy season from June to October, a relatively cool season from November to February, and a hot season from March to May, when the highest temperatures of the year are reached, with peaks of more than 40 °C (104 °F).

Electricity

In Mexico the power plugs and sockets are of type A and B. The standard voltage is 127-V and the standard frequency is 60-Hz.



Technology & Communication

Internet cafes (which charge about M\$10 to M\$15 per-hour) still exist in the Yucatán but are going the way of the dodo; increasingly, there's free WiFi in public plazas, and often it's available in restaurants and shops as well. Same for hotels with a computer for guests: here and there, they're available (and big hotels always have a business center), but mostly it's just WiFi. Many places (hotels, bars, and restaurants) have WiFi, but in some hotels, the signal only reaches the lobby. We use the WiFi icon in our reviews if the signal reaches at least some part of the premises; an internet icon refers to establishments with internet-ready computers for guests.

Infrastructure & Transport

Without a doubt, the most important component of Mexico's transportation system is the 70,000-mile road network. Almost 86% of all trade between Mexico and the U.S. is handled by over-the-road trucks. In some areas, the system is excellent, such as Highway 57 (the NAFTA Highway) running from Mexico City to Laredo, Texas. In others, low capacity and poor road conditions make personal and commercial traffic difficult at best. The Mexican highway system is the primary commercial transportation option in Mexico, moving about 86% of total freight traffic. There are over 68,972-miles (111,000-km) of paved roads and 3,936-miles (6,335-km) of four-lanes expressways throughout the country. It is the most extensive land transportation network in Latin America. The country has two types of highways. Toll highways are modern and generally in excellent condition. Free highways vary greatly in their condition and utility. In some areas they are comparable to U.S. highways; in others two-lane roads move traffic at a snail's pace and often run directly through cities and towns, creating major difficulties for large trucks on a tight schedule. While the toll roads are extremely useful, they are also expensive. A trip from Mexico City to Guadalajara can cost well over a hundred dollars for a truck and trailer.



In Case Of An Emergency

Emergencies 911. 911 is the National Emergency Number throughout the country. It will gradually replace all federal, state and municipal emergency numbers. It has been fully rolled out in the Yucatan, so this should be the first number you call in case of emergency. Plus with the new 911, you're more likely. Through these three numbers, 234 medical, security, civil protection, and public services responders will be easily contactable by telephone. Other useful numbers are:

EMERGENCY NUMBERS/ NUMEROS DE EMERGENCIA

LOCAL POLICE/ POLICIA MUNICIPAL

Local phone 935.00.26

Dialing from mobile 9699.35.00.26

STATE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT/ SSP Y BOMBEROS

Local phone 935.01.30

Dialing from mobile 9699.35.01.30

Language

English is widely spoken in Cancún and the Riviera Maya. Elsewhere on the peninsula, you can get by with English in the main tourist centers, but outside of these Spanish is useful. Any effort to speak Spanish is appreciated and Yucatecans are generally very patient and helpful when they see that you're trying to speak their language. Most Maya speakers also speak Spanish.



LGBT Travel

Mexico is more broad-minded about sexuality than many might expect. LGBTIQ+ travelers rarely attract open discrimination or violence, though it's still uncommon to see open same-sex affection in the smaller rural towns. Public displays of affection, even between heterosexual couples, are uncommon in countryside Yucatán, so same-sex affection may raise an eyebrow.

Religion

Nearly 90% of Mexicans subscribe to Roman Catholicism, but Mexican Catholicism is laced with pre-Hispanic spiritual tradition. You need only to visit the curandero section of a market (where you can buy such talismans as copal, an incense agreeable to the gods; rustic beeswax candles, a traditional offering



Getting There

Most visitors to the Yucatán arrive by air. Direct flights normally originate from an airline's hub city and connecting flights often go through Mexico City. Mexico's flagship airline is Aeroméxico. Its safety record is comparable to the major US and European airlines. Domestic low-cost carriers provide service mostly from Mexico City. MayAir runs prop planes that stop in Cozumel, Cancún, and Mérida. The majority of flights into the peninsula arrive in Cancún or Mérida.

Driving

Driving is not the cheapest way to get to Mexico, and it is definitely not the easiest way to get to the Yucatán peninsula. Highway 180 runs north from Villahermosa, the state capital of Tabasco, then it heads along the coast to Campeche and makes its way inland toward Mérida, where it veers east toward Cancún. You can either take the free highway to Cancún (Highway 180) or a toll road (Highway 180D). In Cancún, Highway 180 connects with Highway 307, which runs south along the Riviera Maya and Costa Maya to Chetumal, Quintana Roo's capital. From Chetumal, Highway 186 takes you to Highway 199, the turnoff for Palenque and San Cristóbal de las Casas, in Chiapas. To drive your car into Mexico beyond 25-km (16-miles), you'll need a temporary car-importation permit, which is granted after you provide a required list of documents. The permit can be obtained after you cross the border into Mexico through Banco del Ejército (Banjercito) officials with Mexican Customs (Aduanas), or at Mexican consulates in Austin, San Francisco, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and San Bernardino.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

The Mexicans you meet will undoubtedly be hard working individuals with strong family ties. Mexicans are extremely family oriented. Children are adored here and much attention is paid to the old and disabled. Mexico has a rich culture, a fascinating history and is nothing short of magical. The people reflect this and do so matching western contemporary styles. You may see a young boy with baggy pants and a skateboard sitting at a computer terminal in an Internet café in a remote village while his mother, in traditional Maya clothing, waits outside. Fewer women opt for the traditional huipil, western fashion prevails instead. The modern world exists all over Mexico integrated with traditional lifestyles. What will evolve will be truly interesting.

Bucket List

Visit Las Coloradas pink lakes

Snorkel With Sea Turtles

Swimming In Cenotes underground cave

Scuba Diving Around Cozumel

Kayaking Bacalar Lagoon

Enjoy the nightlife

Family Travel Highlights

Swim with whale sharks in Isla Holbox

Croc-spotting in Río Lagartos

Snorkel in the Caribbean

Cruise the Jungle in Yaxchilán

Sail on a pirate ship in Cancún

Tourism Authority

The Mexico Tourism Board (tel. 800/44-MEXICO [44-639426] in the U.S.; or 01-800/006-8839 or tel. 078 from within Mexico; www.visitmexico.com) is an excellent source for general information; The Yucatán Tourism Board is at Calle 59 no. 514, Centro, 97000 Mérida, Yuc. (tel. 999/924-9389).



Foods To Try

Chilaquiles

Chiles Rellenos

Huevos Motulenos

Papadzules

Pavo Relleno Negro

Pibil

Poc Chuc

Queso Relleno

Salbutes

Sopa de Lima

Drinks To Try

Horchata de Coco

Chaya fresh juice

Pitahaya (dragonfruit) fresh juice

Pineapple with chaya

Cristal Negra

Xtabentun



Photography Hot Spots

The Tulum Mayan Ruins

Coco Tulum Hotel Swings

Tulum Beach Road

Matcha Mama

Azulik Hotel

Cenotes Dos Ojos

Nomade Hotel

Izamal The Yellow Town

Calakmul Mayan Ruins

Souvenirs To Buy

Handmade Clothing

Beaded/Handmade Jewelry

Silver Jewelry

Handwoven Beach Bags

Xtabentun

Chocolate

Hammocks

