



Culture, Food, and the Women behind

El Dia de Los Muertos in Oaxaca, Mexico

October 26- November 3rd, 2025

We're going to the culinary and cultural capital of Mexico during one of the most amazing times of the year! If you love beauty, eating, bustling markets, bright colors, street art, friendly people, arts and crafts, rich history, and hands-on experiences, this is your trip! For ease and fun, we are staying at the same boutique hotel the whole time so you can unpack and enjoy the day's activities!

Sunday, October 26 Bienvenidos a Mexico (D)

You are so welcome to arrive a day or two early, but please plan to arrive no later than 2 pm on October 26 to Xoxocotlán International Airport (OAX) as our tour officially begins this evening! (We always budget 2 group transfers on our arrival day, but taxis from the airport are super easy and safe no matter when you arrive!)

3:00pm For those arriving early Malia from Altruvistas will be at the lobby to welcome you and assist with check- ins.

4:30pm You will meet your local guide Citlali and your GirlFriendCircles facilitator, J'Leen, for a welcome circle in the hotel lobby at 5 pm.

6:30pm Meet in the lobby to walk to our delicious Traditional Welcome Dinner!

Monday, October 27 Orientation and World Heritage (B, L)

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am Let's move our bodies and take our 5 senses out into the city! We'll enjoy a historic Walking City Tour that will include el Zocalo, the Temple of Santo Domingo de Guzman, an excellent example of Baroque architecture, the archaeological exhibits at the Oaxaca Regional Museum and the famous 20 de Noviembre and Benito Juarez Markets.

One highlight today is the Ethnobotanical Garden of Oaxaca which exhibits hundreds of live plant species, all native to Oaxaca. Planting began in 1998 with plants coming from different regions in the state of Oaxaca, such as arid, humid, low tropical and high mountainous temperate zones. The garden represents the broad diversity of geological formations, types of vegetation and climates that characterize Oaxaca.

1:00 pm Lunch

3:00pm We've invited our program director Juan de Dios to share with us about "The History and Cultural Diversity of Oaxaca". Then enjoy a Q & A.

5:00pm Free time to rest.

Dinner and evening are free for you to rest, wander and explore the many options in town.

Tuesday, October 28 Monte Alban : Zapoteca Culture (B,L)

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am We are off to the wonderful Monte Albán archeológico site, a large pre-Colombian site just a few kilometres outside of Cruz Xoxocotlán, a small city and municipality located 5 km from the state capital of Oaxaca. It is one of the earliest cities of Meso America. Here we will learn about this ancient place and have time to walk, explore, and take lots of photos. This site is well-known for the Zapotec culture and the Zapotec civilization that occupied the area around 600 BCE.

1:00pm Lunch at el Mirador del Fortin

3:00pm Today we will learn about the cacao tradition in Oaxaca at the tasting room of Chimalapa Cacao. <https://chimacacao.com/degustacion-de-chocolate/>

5:30pm Evening is free!

Wednesday, October 29

The Culinary Arts

(B, L)

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am This morning after breakfast we are off to indulge in the incredible culinary arts of Oaxacan cooking firsthand.

Our hosts will walk to the nearby markets where we will pick up some last-minute items and you will also receive a short tour of how to choose the ingredients that we will be using for that class. This is a fun interactive time that ends in our scrumptious creation.

2:30 pm Return to Oaxaca

3:30pm Enjoy an inspiring overview of the indigenous history of Mezcal at our hotel. Mtra. Sósima Olivera will provide a tasting while we learn about the first indigenous women owned mezcal brand.

5:30pm Dinner and evening are free to enjoy some great local music venues

Thursday, October 30

Mitla & Teotitlan

(B,L)

8:00am Breakfast

9:00am This morning we will leave for Mitla and Teotitlan.

10:00am We start with a visit to the Archeological site of Mitla. Visiting Mitla in Oaxaca offers a profound glimpse into the intricate artistry and spiritual heritage of the Zapotec civilization, showcasing its iconic geometric mosaics and sacred cultural significance.

1:00pm Visit and enjoy lunch with the Cooperativa Nueva Vida. See their weaving exposition of wool and natural colors. Teotitlán del Valle is a famous weaving village just outside of Oaxaca that is renowned for its traditional and high-quality weaving wares. Pastora will share the powerful story of the women behind this co-op.

3:00pm Explore free time to visit other textile shops.

4:30 pm We will also make quick stops to visit Panteon de Teotitlan—where you can see examples of how families honor their ancestors with decorated graves, and the Milenario Arbol del Tule— one of the oldest and widest trees in the world (with a fun tour guide!)

6:00pm Free evening for dining, shopping and nightlife!

Friday, October 31 Etla, Ancestors & Altars (B, L)

7:30am Breakfast

8:30am Today we leave Oaxaca City for Etla town, only about half an hour away. Etla is famous because it was the original Zapotec capital of the Oaxaca before Monte Alban was supplanted. Visiting Etla in Oaxaca offers the chance to explore its vibrant markets, traditional cheese-making, and rich cultural heritage, all set against a stunning backdrop of the Central Valleys. We start today learning about Quesillo-traditional cheese making with family cheese makers.

Then we are off to the tianguis market to shop for flowers and offerings for the altars we are collectively going to be building for our Day of the Dead ceremony.

12:00pm Demonstration of the Pan de Muerto. See how it is prepared & get some for our Altar. While the rest of the year this “yolk bread” (pan de yema) is popular, this time of year it becomes Pan de Muertos as decorative heads are stuck into it.

1:00pm Lunch at La Villa de Etla, Restaurante Isabel.

3:00pm We have this afternoon to create our communal altar and flower chains with all the goodies we bought at the market. This is really a memorable creative time for us to share. We have also take turns decorating as you feel inspired.

Free time for dinner on your own tonight.

7:30pm Group Sharing Circle of our beloved ones.

8:30pm Leave for the Panteón with our local host. Visiting the Panteón in Oaxaca, especially during Day of the Dead, offers a profound cultural experience as the cemetery comes alive with candlelight, marigolds, and heartfelt tributes, showcasing the deep connection between the living and the departed in Oaxacan tradition.

11: 00pm Return to the hotel.

November 1st Día de los Muertos (B, L)

Today marks Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, a vibrant tradition celebrated for thousands of years, with roots tracing back to Mexico's indigenous tribes. This morning, you'll have the opportunity to explore the stunning altars that blend artistry and spirituality, as schools and community organizations showcase their intricate and breathtaking creations in friendly competitions. (Or sleep in and have a more spacious morning if needed!)

10:30am This morning we have cultural interaction with a local curandera (healer) to learn about traditional healing and medicine in Oaxaca. We will break into two groups and participate in an herbal infused steam ritual to cleanse ourselves, called a Temazcalera with Terapeuta Cristina Nuñez. Our Curandera will explain it all to you and ensure you are well-prepared, but basically, you'll enter a dome-shaped sweat lodge (representing the womb) and experience a super special experience that can be both physically healing and spiritually meaningful.

1:00pm Lunch

3:00pm Free Time for rest, shopping & dinner. Option to go to with Malia & Citlali to hire women to paint our faces and learn about the Catarinas.

8:00pm Let's enjoy Comparzas de los Viejos to keep vigil. Tonight is a Party! Bring an outfit for dressing up for a night on the streets!

November 2nd Arts! (B, L, D)

9:00am Breakfast

10:00am Leave for the San Bartolo Coyotepec Community. We will visit the Art Museum here and then enjoy a hands-on ceramic making workshop creating ceramic hearts.

1:00pm Lunch is buffet style at Cuilapan. Then we will visit a black ceramic market.

3:00pm It is our last afternoon here so let us make sure you have the time to do whatever you most want! Maybe you have more shopping to do? Maybe you just want to wander the markets again? Maybe you want to people watch from some cute café? Or maybe you want to invite a new friend from our group to go connect over a happy hour? Whatever you need, enjoy this city in all its expressive glory. We will set time to visit local women's owned craft shops. The crafts in Oaxaca are amazing!

6:00 pm We end our journey enjoying a Wrap up Circle in the hotel.

8:00pm Farewell Dinner!

November 3rd. Hasta Luego Oaxaca (B)
Breakfast and check out of hotel, then transfer to the airport.

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