

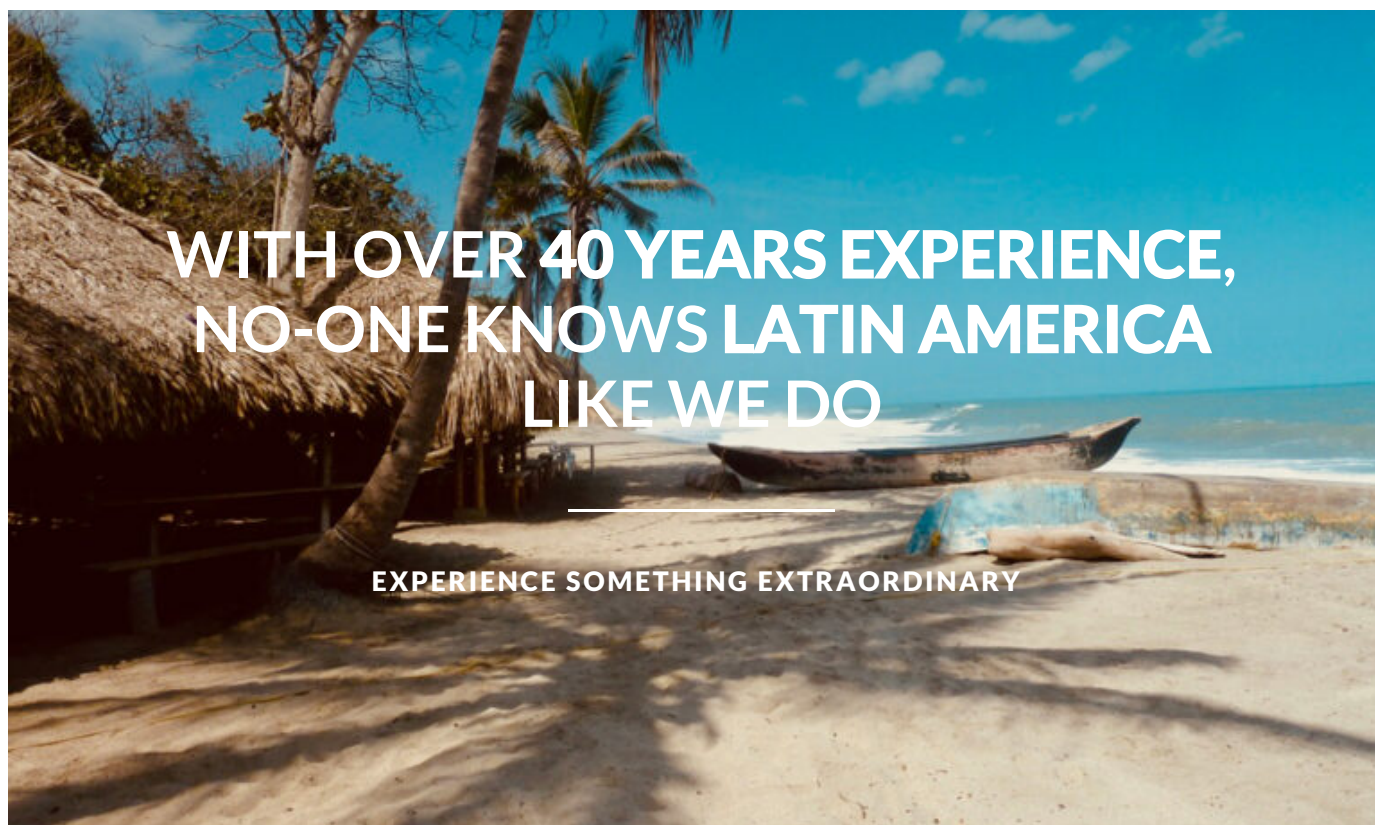


PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

## SIGNATURE MEXICO: DAY OF THE DEAD

9 days from £3,080pp

MEXICO / MEXICO CITY / OAXACA



## WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

## OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

### WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

### TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

### THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



## OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Head for Oaxaca and observe Mexico's biggest annual cultural event, the Day of the Dead celebrations.

<b>DAY 1</b>	26 Oct 2025: Arrive Mexico City.
<b>DAY 2</b>	27 Oct 2025: Explore Mexico City with a guide.
<b>DAY 3</b>	28 Oct 2025: At leisure in Mexico City with optional excursions.
<b>DAY 4</b>	29 Oct 2025: Fly to Oaxaca: rest of day at leisure
<b>DAY 5</b>	30 Oct 2025: Valley of Ocotlan, Coyotepec and Tilcajete.
<b>DAY 6</b>	31 Oct 2025: Zaachila, Day of the Dead altar, Xoxo Cemetery
<b>DAY 7</b>	01 Nov 2025: Day of the Innocents. Visit Teotitlan del Valle, Mitla
<b>DAY 8</b>	02 Nov 2025: Day of the Dead. At leisure in Oaxaca. Excursion to Monte Alban.
<b>DAY 9</b>	03 Nov 2025: Return to Mexico City

## ITINERARY

Our Day of the Dead tour invites you to observe the colourful traditions and rituals of this iconic celebration in Mexico. Spend some time in Mexico City before moving on to Oaxaca which, with its airy patios and graceful arcades, is famed for its colourful market, serapes, crafts and dances. The celebrations are particularly animated in this region. Hotels fill up well in advance and early booking is essential!

The Day of the Dead (*Día de los Muertos*) involves a traditional ritual, both vivacious and contemplative, during which Mexicans pray for and remember friends or family members who have passed away and assist them on their spiritual journey.

Death is not to be feared: this is a celebration of the lives of those who have died. The so-called Day of the Dead – actually three days – gets under way on Halloween, 31 October and extends into 1-2 November, coinciding with All Saints Day and All Souls Day in the Catholic calendar. Exuberant parades with rumbustious music, where participants wear ghoulish costumes and skull-masks in vibrant colours take place alongside calmer, quieter celebrations featuring anecdotes, many amusing, about the lives of the departed. Observe local families and learn about the fascinating Zapotec culture, an indigenous pre-Columbian civilisation which thrived in the valley of Oaxaca.

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### DAY 1

#### 26 Oct 2025: Arrive Mexico City.

Transfer to your hotel in the historic centre of Mexico's storied capital.

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## DAY 2

### 27 Oct 2025: Explore Mexico City with a guide.

Mexico City has evolved over the centuries into a modern day metropolis from its founding as the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán in the 14th century. A history of agricultural cultivation, religious ritual, and warring tribes took a seismic turn with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores and the development of the city was fuelled by silver mining. This is all reflected in the cultural vestiges apparent all over the modern day city which you will glimpse during your guided walking tour.

Your tour of Mexico City includes the historical places of interest around the vast main square (Zócalo) including Aztec Templo Mayor and the 16th century Metropolitan cathedral. You may spend the rest of the day exploring independently, or consider an optional excursion the magnificent Museum of Anthropology. In our view this is one of the continent's best museums, with presentations representing different regions, each featuring exhibits manifesting society in pre-Hispanic history and the colonial period as well as showing how life is lived in contemporary Mexico.

### DAY 3

#### **28 Oct 2025: At leisure in Mexico City with optional excursions.**

Preparations for the Day of the Dead festivities around Mexico City will already be underway. You can expect things to be very busy out and about. Today is free to explore on your own. If considering an optional excursion we advise you to arrange this with us at the time of booking.

Possibilities include the magnificent pyramids at Teotihuacan, which dates from the time of Christ and was once one of the largest cities in the world. Teotihuacán is hugely influential in the historic narrative of modern Mexico and, although it had already been abandoned by the time of the Aztecs, even this great empire held it in awe. Soak up the history as you stroll along the imposing Avenue of the Dead, leading to the vast Pyramid of the Sun, and take the opportunity to climb its vertiginous, ancient steps for a panorama of the ruins and the surrounding countryside.

Alternatively a visit to the 'floating gardens' of Xochimilco, a network of canals lined by fruit and flower gardens and markets, can be great fun – as residents of Mexico City flock to be transported in one of the colourful gondolas where they are serenaded by a mariachi band. You too will have the opportunity to glide through the canals at a lazy pace on one of these 'trajineras'. Xochimilco was once connected to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City) and was where they grew much of their food. Combined with a visit to Coyoacan and the Frida Kahlo Museum this is a great day out.



## DAY 4

### 29 Oct 2025: Fly to Oaxaca: rest of day at leisure

Transfer to the airport for your 1-hour flight to Oaxaca, in southern Mexico. This magnetic city is at the heart of the state of Oaxaca, where the Day of the Dead is marked with a heady combination of solemnity and joy. Stay at a simple hotel closed to the city centre for the next four nights.

Preparations for Day of the Dead celebrations should be well under way by today. The afternoon is yours to wander through Oaxaca, observing the festivities as you please. Alternatively, take an optional excursion to the ancient Zapotec fortress city of Monte Alban, a short drive above the city.

Be sure to take a look inside the energetic Day of the Dead *tianguis* at the Abastos Market. In an open-air bazaar you'll browse the stalls piled high with Day of the Dead ornaments and decorations including colourful strings of beads, bunches of vibrant marigolds and the iconic illustrated sugar skulls. Watch families buying decorations to adorn their home altars in tribute to their loved ones.

## DAY 5

### 30 Oct 2025: Valley of Ocotlan, Coyotepec and Tilcajete.

Visit Oaxaca's outlying villages where you can find many examples of crafts and folk art. At this time of the year artisans set up the family altars and you may witness first-hand how Oaxacan families welcome their relatives who are visiting on this special occasion. First stop is the Ocotlan Market, one of the biggest and most important of the Oaxaca region. It's a feast for the senses: at this time of the year, you'll see an array of products used to decorate the altars for the Day of the Dead, including flowers, incense, bread, and chocolate.

Continue to San Antonino Castillo, a town known for the intricate, handmade embroidery designs which are a signature feature of the blouses and dresses of the local women. The next stop today is San Miguel Tilcajete, a town of fewer than 2000 souls known for Alebrijes, fine wooden and intricately painted animals. While this style of wood carving is a relatively new craft, dating back only two generations, these objets d'art represent a magnificent expression of Mexican folklore.

Finally visit Santo Tomas Jalietza for more beautiful weavings and embroidery work before returning to Oaxaca where there's a tour to get you orientated in the city, and out exploring the main markets.

## DAY 6

### 31 Oct 2025: Zaachila, Day of the Dead altar, Xoxo Cemetery

Visit Zaachila, six kilometres from the city of Oaxaca. In the pre-Columbian era, it was the main city-state for the Valley of Oaxaca after the fall of Monte Albán. A deeply traditional town, it has preserved its indigenous music, dance and gastronomy. The town is well known for its open air market on Thursdays, which occupies most of the town centre and which is little changed since pre-Hispanic times. The town will be preparing for the Day of the Dead, capitalising on the murals which adorn the walls, many of which are Day of the Dead related. You'll get to see the main square which features a simply decorated Spanish-style church, tombs of the Mixtec culture which dominated the region after the fall of Monte Alban. You'll also be taken to one of the local day of the Dead altars.

In the late evening head off to the village of Xoxocotlán, one of the oldest towns in the Valley of Oaxaca. The Xoxo cemetery, a short drive outside of town, is one of the most important sites of the annual Day of the Dead celebrations. Families gather to sit alongside the tombs of their loved ones, and the atmosphere is one of a solemn and dignified vigil combined with joyous remembrance. The decorations in the old cemetery include marigolds, candles, and copal incense. An abundance of flowers decorates the graveyard where the people of Xoxocotlán hold a vigil by candlelight at the decorated tombs. Return to Oaxaca and overnight.



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## DAY 7

### 01 Nov 2025: Day of the Innocents. Visit Teotitlán del Valle, Mitla

Visit Teotitlán del Valle, a weaving village and one of the major craft centres of the Valley of Oaxaca. The history of this craft dates back to when tributes of cloth were paid to the Aztecs. Although townfolk will be busy preparing for the festivities you may see Zapotec families at work and see their delicate weaving and spinning techniques which use natural dyes to create tablecloths and rugs. Candles are also made here, ready to festoon the altars to mark the Day of the Dead.

Continue to Mitla, an important Zapotec city after the decline of Monte Alban, and later occupied by the Mixtec. The main attraction is its impressive inlaid stone mosaics that decorate its palaces. Best preserved of the ruins are its six 38 metre long columns in its centre. Many of Mitla's temples were destroyed by the Spanish and then used to build the Iglesia de San Pablo, the Catholic church which dominates the site. Mitla is a classic example of how small is beautiful: it is much more modest in size than Monte Alban, yet its geometric stonework is intricately beautiful and for many visitors to the region it is a favourite site.

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## DAY 8

### 02 Nov 2025: Day of the Dead. At leisure in Oaxaca. Excursion to Monte Alban.

As festivities roll into their final day you will have free time to soak up the atmosphere in Oaxaca. Although the Day of the Dead festivities span several days, 2nd November is the most important day for Mexicans to spend time in the cemeteries or at home with their families.

We include a side trip to Monte Alban, perhaps the most significant archaeological site of the region. It is a short (9km) drive to these ancient ruins: the city was the capital of the Zapotec people, flourishing until its demise around 950AD. Lying on a hill, the views from the temples and pyramids of the surrounding area are superb. At its height, the city was a highly sophisticated society of over 25,000 inhabitants.

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## DAY 9

### 03 Nov 2025: Return to Mexico City

It's time to continue your journey, with a transfer to the airport for your flight back to Mexico City.

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

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## INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

City tour and Anthropology Museum in Mexico City

Oaxaca: Explore the city, local markets and artisan towns

Visit the Zapotec ruins of Mitla and Monte Alban

Observe traditional Day of the Dead activities in Oaxaca city

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## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

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## ESSENTIALS

### SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

7 days, 6 nights: Mexico City 3; Oaxaca 5.

### ACCOMMODATION

We use a mix of hotel standards from mid-range upwards, choosing accommodation we think is great value, comfortable, well-located and which showcases a touch of local character. Properties will vary in heritage from modern to traditional-style countryside properties (haciendas).

### TRANSPORT

2 domestic flights.

### MEALS

Breakfast daily.

### GUIDES

Our local, trusted and carefully selected partners understand the expectations of our customers very well, and their staff and guides are consistently singled out for praise by clients on their return. On this holiday, you will be joined by different guides for each activity and or region, ensuring you benefit from specialised expertise and knowledge, often from someone local to the area.

### OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

As well as any included activities, this Private Journey includes some free time for optional excursions. As optional excursions are often subject to availability, we recommend you discuss and arrange them with your Travel Expert as early as possible before you depart.

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### GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

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Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

#### GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

**0208 747 8315**

#### OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

#### SEND US AN EMAIL

[tours@journeylatinamerica.com](mailto:tours@journeylatinamerica.com)