

# FIELD. MUSEUM



## **Mexico City & Oaxaca's Ancient Treasures & Culinary Traditions** Exclusive Journey with Field Museum Archaeologists

with Dr. Gary Feinman, MacArthur Curator of Anthropology, and  
Linda Nicholas, Adjunct Curator of Mesoamerican Archaeology & Ethnology

**January 25 – February 2, 2026**





## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

**EXPLORE** **Mexico City** and **Oaxaca's** ancient wonders and culinary delights through exclusive experiences, from after-hours museum tours to private visits with master artisans

**TRAVEL** with Field Museum archaeologists **Dr. Gary M. Feinman** and **Linda M. Nicholas** as they take you behind the scenes of their discoveries in the ancient Oaxacan cities of **Lambityeco** and **Mitla**

**TAKE** an exclusive pre-hours visit to **Frida Kahlo's Mexico City birthplace**, Casa Azul, with an intimate look at the artist's life and work in her home and studio before the museum opens to the public

**ACCOMPANY** an expert on **an in-depth tour of Teotihuacán**, exploring the astronomically aligned pyramids and avenues of this expansive pre-Hispanic archaeological site outside of Mexico City

**ENJOY** a director-led, after-hours tour of the **Museo Nacional de Antropología**, exploring its collections of treasures from Mexico's ancient civilizations including colossal Olmec heads, intricate Aztec artifacts, and priceless Maya objects

**JOIN** **an acclaimed chef at his private ranch** for a hands-on experience crafting Oaxacan cuisine, selecting fresh local produce to make traditional dishes and ending with a shared meal of your creations

**LEARN** about the ancient Zapotec civilization on **a guided tour of the UNESCO-listed Monte Albán**, venturing into secret areas with this impressive, pre-Columbian archaeological site

**MEET** **an internationally renowned ceramicist** for an inside look at traditional Oaxacan pottery techniques at her private hometown studio in Santa María Atzompa

**SAVOR** the distinctive flavors of mezcal on a private, behind-the-scenes visit to **Los Danzantes Distillery** in Santiago Matatlán, witnessing their traditional production process firsthand

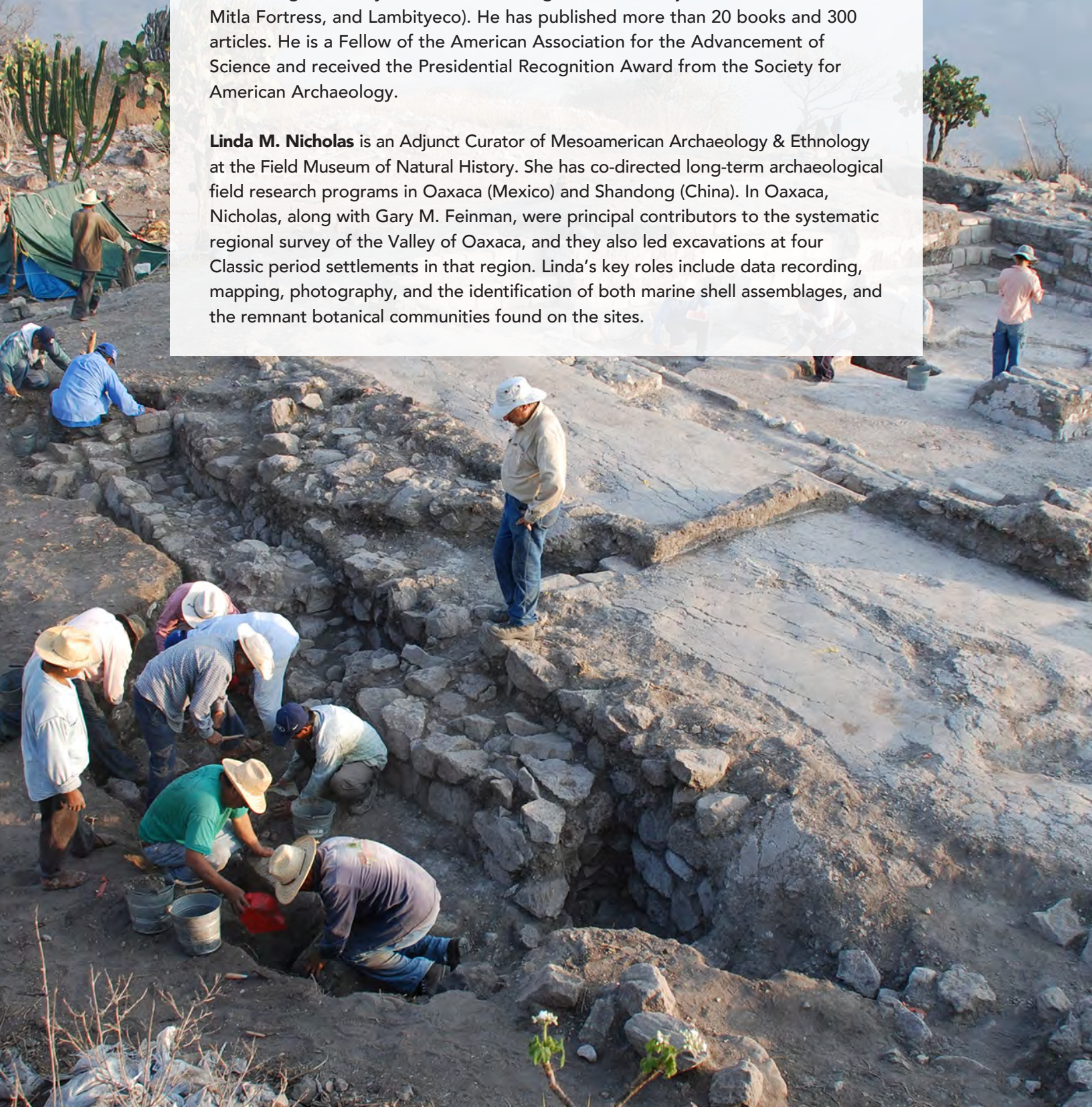
**DELIGHT** in an exclusive guided visit to the **Museo Textil de Oaxaca**, where a master weaver will lead you through a vast collection of colorful textiles showcasing Oaxacan Indigenous traditions



## TRAVELING WITH YOU

**Gary M. Feinman** is the MacArthur Curator of Anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History. He has co-directed long-term archaeological field programs in Oaxaca (Mexico) and Shandong (China). In Oaxaca, Feinman has conducted investigations for more than 40 years, beginning with a systematic regional archaeological survey and then excavating at four sites (Ejutla, El Palmillo, the Mitla Fortress, and Lambityeco). He has published more than 20 books and 300 articles. He is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and received the Presidential Recognition Award from the Society for American Archaeology.

**Linda M. Nicholas** is an Adjunct Curator of Mesoamerican Archaeology & Ethnology at the Field Museum of Natural History. She has co-directed long-term archaeological field research programs in Oaxaca (Mexico) and Shandong (China). In Oaxaca, Nicholas, along with Gary M. Feinman, were principal contributors to the systematic regional survey of the Valley of Oaxaca, and they also led excavations at four Classic period settlements in that region. Linda's key roles include data recording, mapping, photography, and the identification of both marine shell assemblages, and the remnant botanical communities found on the sites.







Dear Field Museum Friend,

From **January 25 to February 2, 2026**, we invite you to join us for an eight-night cultural adventure in **Mexico City** and **Oaxaca de Juárez**, vibrant cities built on the foundations of great civilizations. For the last 25 years as Field Museum archaeologists, we've spent time in Oaxaca unearthing the secrets of its ancient cultures. We're thrilled to share our stories and vivid memories as we take you behind the scenes of Zapotec cities where we've made monumental discoveries.

You'll be inspired by this inside look at how Field Museum research has transformed the understanding of ancient Mesoamerica over the past century, revealing a world more complex and interconnected than previously imagined. You'll also experience how Mexico City and Oaxaca's ancient traditions have influenced their modern art and culinary scenes. Enjoy the excitement of meeting acclaimed artists and chefs, curator-guided visits to museums and private collections, special meals at Michelin-starred restaurants, and much more.

We will begin in Mexico City, where highlights include exclusive early-morning access to Frida Kahlo's birthplace and lifelong home; an after-hours private tour with the director of the Museo Nacional de Antropología and its 23-room collection of Indigenous treasures; and expert-guided tours of Aztec ruins, 16th-century churches, and emperor Maximilian I's 18th-century Chapultepec Castle. A guided morning visit to the soaring pyramids of the nearby pre-Aztec site Teotihuacán, one of the ancient world's largest cities, will dazzle us.

In Oaxaca, highlights include an expert-led look at the grand plaza of Monte Albán, the UNESCO-listed Zapotec capital. Then we'll take you **behind the scenes of our excavations at Lambityeco**, where we'll introduce you to a massive crocodile stone carving we unearthed. At **Mitla**, with its beautiful stone mosaics, we'll show you what we learned about early trade networks and daily life, building on a century of Field Museum research.

You'll have **private hands-on experiences** with visionaries who are updating Oaxacan traditions for the 21st century, including an exclusive cooking class at the private ranch of a celebrated Oaxacan chef, a private textile museum tour with a master weaver, a private studio visit with an influential Oaxacan ceramicist, and an intimate private visit to a traditional mezcal distillery for a tasting and inside look at its centuries-old production process.

**To reserve your place**, please call our tour operator Arrangements Abroad at 800-221-1944 or email [trips@arrangementsabroad.com](mailto:trips@arrangementsabroad.com). We're excited to share the thrill of archaeological discovery with you at the very sites that have defined our careers—and perhaps you'll make some discoveries of your own.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Gary M. Feinman  
MacArthur Curator of Anthropology

Linda M. Nicholas  
Adjunct Curator of Mesoamerican  
Archaeology & Ethnology



Dr. Gary Feinman and Linda Nicholas

Activity Level:



Pace Level:



Visit Arrangements Abroad's website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs](http://www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs).

# Mexico City & Oaxaca's Ancient Treasures & Culinary Traditions

## Exclusive Journey with Field Museum Archaeologists

January 25 – February 2, 2026



### SUNDAY, JANUARY 25: DEPARTURE / MEXICO CITY

Depart on a flight from Chicago for Mexico City. Upon arrival, transfer to the **JW Marriott Hotel Mexico City Polanco**. After checking in, you have the afternoon at your leisure to unwind, perhaps exploring the nearby streets or simply relaxing at the hotel.

At dusk, gather at **Arango Cocina de Raíces** for a welcome dinner featuring dishes from across Mexico. Try the restaurant's slow-cooked lamb *barbacoa* or Oaxacan *mole negro*, a complex sauce with chilies and chocolate. From your table, gaze at the lit-up Monumento a la Revolución. This 220-foot tall arch, built in 1938, honors heroes of the Mexican Revolution. D

### MONDAY, JANUARY 26: MEXICO CITY / TEOTIHUACÁN / MEXICO CITY

After breakfast, meet a local expert for an in-depth tour of **Teotihuacán**, an ancient city 31 miles northeast of Mexico City. The site, settled around 600 B.C., grew into one of the largest cities in the ancient world by 100 A.D., with up to 200,000 residents. See how the city's pre-Hispanic people laid out roads, temples, and pyramids to align with the rising sun.

Walk the **Avenue of the Dead**, the main 1.2-mile-long street. Climb the 213-foot tall Pyramid of the Sun, built around 100 A.D. See the smaller **Pyramid of the Moon** and the **Temple of Quetzalcoatl**, with its carved serpents. Back in Mexico City, gather for a late lunch at a local restaurant. Rest at your hotel before dinner.

B,L,D

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 27: MEXICO CITY

This morning, meet the director of **the Templo Mayor archaeological site** for a guided visit of this former Aztec temple that dates to 1325. Dedicated to Huitzilopochtli, god of war, and Tlaloc, god of rain, this landmark was once considered the center of the universe in Aztec cosmology and featured two stepped pyramids.

Next, take a guided tour of the adjacent **Catedral Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México**, built over 250 years starting in 1573. It blends Gothic, Baroque, and Neoclassical styles. Inside, view the ornate Altar of the Kings and the intricately carved choir. Explore the **Zócalo**, Mexico City's main plaza since the Aztec era. Stop for an included lunch in the historic city center.

In the afternoon, enjoy an expert-guided look at **Chapultepec Castle**, built in 1785 and one of only two royal palaces in North America once inhabited by monarchs. Habsburg Emperor Maximilian I once lived here before it became the residence of Mexican presidents.

Inside this castle featuring a blend of Baroque and neoclassical styles, see murals depicting Mexico's history by such famous artists as David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco, and behold its Art Deco stained glass from 1916.







Studio, Casa Azul, Mexico City

Then venture to one of the world's most acclaimed museums, the **Museo Nacional de Antropología**, for an exclusive after-hours tour led by the museum's director. Away from the normal crowds, experience its 23 cavernous rooms, each dedicated to a pre-Columbian Mesoamerican civilization or a contemporary Indigenous group. Marvel at the museum's 24-ton Aztec Sun Stone, giant Olmec stone heads, and other precious objects.

B,L,D

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28: MEXICO CITY

Venture to the quaint artistic neighborhood of Coyoacán for an exclusive, early-access visit to **Casa Azul** (Blue House), the lifelong home of Frida Kahlo (1907–1954), before the public arrives. Built in 1904 by Frida's father, Guillermo Kahlo, this single-story house was a touchstone and creative sanctuary for Frida throughout her childhood and career.

Walk through Frida's studio and bedroom, left as they were during her lifetime, and see her paint-stained clothes and art supplies up close. Gaze upon some of Frida's famous works, including her final painting, *Viva la Vida*, from 1954.

Next, enjoy a guided look at the **Capilla de la Inmaculada Concepción en Coyoacán**, one of Mexico's first European churches, built in 1525 under the orders of Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés. It is said that Cortés married La Malinche, his Indigenous translator who served as his "bridge" to the Aztec people he conquered, in this church, and your expert guide will share legendary stories about her life.

Afterwards, enjoy a guided cultural tour of the **Mercado de Comida de Coyoacán**, one of the city's most diverse gastronomical destinations. For lunch, perhaps try *tostadas* at the famous Tostadas Coyoacán stall, known for its seafood. Return to the hotel to rest.

This evening, enjoy a tasting menu at the Michelin-starred **Pujol**, perennially recognized as one of the world's top restaurants. Pujol focuses on corn, seafood, and vegetables, using traditional Mexican techniques with a modern twist. You might taste blood orange *aguachile* (a ceviche-like dish) or lobster tacos with *salsa macha* (a nutty sauce made with chipotle peppers).

B,L,D

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 29: MEXICO CITY / OAXACA

After breakfast and checking out, transfer to the Mexico City airport for your flight to Oaxaca. Upon arrival, savor an Oaxacan lunch at **Catedral**, housed in a colonial building with arched dining areas and a sun-lit fountain patio.

You might encounter dishes like the *caldo de hongos de la sierra* (mushroom soup with shrimp paste and epazote), *pescado en salsa de flor de calabaza* (fish in pumpkin blossom sauce), or *lechón al horno estilo Tehuantepec* (Tehuantepec-style roasted suckling pig).

In the afternoon, take a guided walking tour through **Oaxaca's UNESCO-listed historical center and the Zócalo**, the city's main square since 1529. This traffic-free area, shaded by tall trees, serves as Oaxaca's social hub. Along the way, listen to *marimba* bands, watch street performers, and visit **Benito Juárez Market** to buy local goods and see artisans at work.

Along the way, stop for a guided tour of the city's most splendid church, the **Templo de Santo Domingo de Guzmán**, constructed from 1575 to 1731. Its New Spanish Baroque style features intricate carvings, saint statues, and façades of local green volcanic stone.



Templo de Santo Domingo de Guzmán, Oaxaca





Your next stop is an exclusive guided tour led by a master weaver at the **Museo Textil de Oaxaca**, housed in an 18th-century building restored in 2007. See a selection of 10,000 textiles, many more than 100 years old, including Zapotec and Mixtec *huipiles* (embroidered women's garments) and fabrics dyed with indigo and cochineal.

The day concludes with a sumptuous dinner at **Criollo**, set in a restored 18th-century mansion. Criollo focuses on local, seasonal Oaxacan cuisine, blending refined cooking with unpretentious, traditional comfort food. Dishes might include tacos with wild greens, mullet with Caribbean flavors, or *chichilo mole* (a type of Oaxacan sauce). B,L,D

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 30: OAXACA / SANTA MARÍA ATZOMPA

Enjoy a guided look at one of Mexico's most impressive ancient sites, **Monte Albán**, which sits on a flat hilltop a few miles west of Oaxaca de Juárez. Founded around 500 B.C., Monte Albán was the Zapotec civilization's capital and was inhabited by Zapotecs and Mixtecs over a 1,500-year period.

Explore off-the-beaten-path areas rarely seen by visitors on this guided inside look. Marvel at the city's grand plaza, truncated pyramids, ball court, underground passageways, and over 170 tombs, making it one of the Americas' most elaborate burial sites.

Pay special attention to the famous Danzantes stones, intricate bas-reliefs depicting human figures initially thought to be "dancers" but now believed to be captured war prisoners. Along the way, savor the commanding view of the surrounding valley.

After lunch, travel to nearby **Santa María Atzompa**—a small town noted for its Zapotec pottery traditions dating to the seventh century A.D. and specifically its green-glazed pottery, a style that began when Spanish settlers introduced glazing in the 1500s.

Here, **meet a master ceramicist in her hometown studio**. Trained in pottery by her parents, she creates pieces based on Oaxacan myths and culture, often celebrating women. Cruz doesn't paint her work, instead using *agobes*—natural materials like stone or volcanic ash—to add color.

Returning to Oaxaca City, conclude your day with dinner at the acclaimed **La Teca**, a restaurant run from the chef's home. La Teca serves cuisine from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Mexico's narrow strip of land between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean.

Tehuantepec food blends salty coastal flavors with sweet tropical fruits, setting it apart from other Oaxacan cooking. Try dishes like *tamalitos de cambray* (tamales with chicken, raisins, olives, almonds, and capers) or *molotes de plátano macho* (a plantain dish filled with Oaxacan cheese). B,L,D

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 31: OAXACA

**Join an award-winning chef** and cultural ambassador of Oaxacan cuisine as he leads you on an exclusive culinary immersion today. This morning, he will guide you through Oaxaca's lively *mercado*, buzzing with colorful sights and sounds. With his guidance, handpick the freshest and most flavorful produce from the region's bountiful harvest.



Oaxacan cuisine, photo courtesy of Alejandro Ruiz





Then travel with the master chef to his private ranch outside of Oaxaca. Accompany him on a guided tour of his orchard, where the chef, a passionate advocate of organic farming, will share his knowledge about cultivating these pristine ingredients.

Then roll up your sleeves for a hands-on cooking class led by the talented chef, crafting traditional Oaxacan dishes using the produce you selected earlier. This afternoon for lunch, gather around a beautifully set table, adorned with your culinary creations, and savor the fruits of your labor during a festive private feast. Return to Oaxaca, where the evening is yours to enjoy on your own, with dinner at leisure. B,L

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1: OAXACA / TLACOLULA DE MATAMOROS / SAN PABLO VILLA DE MITLA / SANTIAGO MATATLÁN

Begin your day at **Lambityeco**, a Zapotec city from 500-850 A.D. in the Tlacolula Valley. This 197-acre site, once home to thousands, was known for salt production.

Join Field Museum archaeologists **Dr. Gary Feinman** and **Linda Nicholas** for an exclusive look at areas where they made key finds, including a large stone crocodile carving, the biggest carved stone found at the site. Their work changed how we see Lambityeco's past.

Next, drive to **Mitla**, a Zapotec site active from 900 B.C. to 1521 A.D. Known as "place of tombs" in the Zapotec language, Mitla served as a gateway between life and death for Zapotec nobles and priests. The site's standout feature is its stonework with geometric designs made from small, polished stones fitted without mortar.

Enjoy the exclusive insights of the Field Museum's Dr. Gary Feinman and Linda Nicholas, who mapped Mitla's fortress in 1998. Their work built on over 100 years of Field Museum research in Oaxaca. They found that people here raised turkeys, made obsidian tools, and traded agave fiber. Their digs showed that residents often remodeled their homes, burying deceased relatives inside.

Your journey continues to **Santiago Matatlán** for a mezcal tasting and lunch at **Los Danzantes Distillery**. Go behind the scenes of the compact mudbrick building where tradition meets modern methods. Watch as cooked agaves are crushed by millstones and a horse-drawn *tahona*.

The day ends with a festive farewell dinner at **Casa Oaxaca**, which is overseen by the master chef whom you met earlier at his ranch. Try his take on *mole negro* (complex sauce with chilies and chocolate) or *tlayudas* (large crispy tortillas with toppings). B,L,D

#### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2: OAXACA / RETURN

Depart the hotel early this morning for the flight home. B

#### PROGRAM RATE

**\$12,999 per person, double rate**

**\$15,999 single rate**

#### RATE INCLUDES

- Eight nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine at welcome and farewell dinners
- Internal, one-way, economy-class flight (Mexico City-Oaxaca)
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/hotel/airport group transfers for all participants on suggested flights
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

**NOT INCLUDED IN RATE** International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for those on suggested flights; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

**DISCLAIMER:** This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of The Field Museum and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details please carefully read the terms and conditions at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms](http://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms).



## ACCOMMODATIONS

### JW MARRIOTT HOTEL MEXICO CITY POLANCO

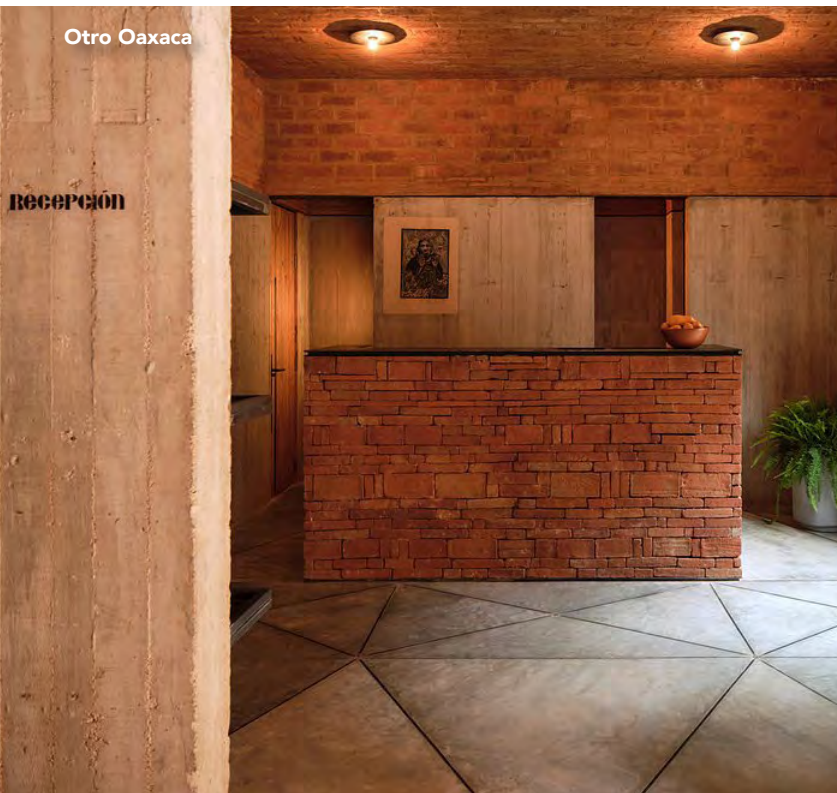
Experience modern luxury and relaxation at this splendid hotel offering easy access to Chapultepec Castle and other unforgettable landmarks. Enjoy stylish rooms with marble bathrooms, on-site Mexican cuisine at Xanat Bistro & Terraza, an outdoor pool, and a well-equipped health club. Plus, guests can take advantage of the nearby helipad with complimentary transportation services.



JW Marriott Hotel Mexico City Polanco

### OTRO OAXACA

In Oaxaca's city center, this new hotel mixes local traditions with contemporary style, featuring rooms adorned with Oaxacan art and handcrafted furnishings. The hotel boasts a chic bar, a peaceful courtyard, and a roof terrace with splendid city views.



Otro Oaxaca



Museo Textil de Oaxaca

## THE FIELD MUSEUM MEXICO CITY & OAXACA'S ANCIENT TREASURES & CULINARY TRADITIONS JANUARY 25 – FEBRUARY 2, 2026 RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please call Arrangements Abroad at 212-514-8921 or 800-221-1944; email: [trips@arrangementsabroad.com](mailto:trips@arrangementsabroad.com); fax: 212-344-7493; or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$1,000 per person (of which \$500 is non-refundable for administrative fees) payable to Arrangements Abroad. Mail to: Arrangements Abroad, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone (home)

(business)

Fax

E-mail

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Room Preference ☐ One bed ☐ Two beds ☐ Single

I wish to share a room with \_\_\_\_\_

### FORM OF PAYMENT

☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to Arrangements Abroad)

☐ Debit card ☐ Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the *Terms & Conditions* of this Program (see [www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms](http://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms) to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date

Front cover: Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City. Highlights page: Murals in Teotihuacán. Traveling with You page: Field Museum excavation at Mitla.  
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