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18 Day Conducted Tour

Mexico and Cuba

for **\$8,975** per person twin share.

This price includes airport taxes and fuel levies

This great price includes:

- Air fares from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane into Mexico City with Qantas and American Airlines, plus international flights from Cancun to Havana and Havana to Mexico City with Aeromexico and a domestic flight within Mexico.
- An 8 day tour of Mexico and the Yucatan, visiting the awe-inspiring Mayan Temples, pyramids and many other places of historical importance.
- A 7 day tour of Cuba, visiting Trinidad, Cienfuegos, Santa Clara and four nights in Cuba's capital Havana. Cuba is a unique blend of communism and capitalism. It is like a country stuck in time since Castro took over in the 1950's.
- A stopover in Dallas, Texas on the way home.
- Very good accommodation, mainly 3 to 4 star.
- Prepaid gratuities to the main guides and drivers.
- Services of local tour guides and if there are 15 or more tour participants there will be an Australian tour escort.



If you don't have a travel partner but wish to travel at twin share rates we will try and assign you with another traveler, but this is not guaranteed. For anyone requiring a single room there will be an extra charge of \$1955.

This is a special group tour with a maximum of about 25 passengers.

**Tour Departs Australia 7th November
and returns 24th November 2016**

We try harder to find you the best travel deal

Itinerary for Mexico and Cuba Tour

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

07.11.16 Australia - Mexico City

Depart Brisbane at 10.25am on QF 521, arriving in Sydney at 1.00pm.

Depart Melbourne at 11.30am on QF 428, arriving in Sydney at 12.25pm.

All passengers then depart Sydney at 3.05pm on Qantas flight QF 7, arriving in Dallas at 1.35pm the same day (You cross the International Date Line).

All passengers depart Dallas at 4.55pm on AA 2233, arriving in Mexico City at 7.30pm.

Upon arrival we are met and transferred to our hotel, which is a half block from the National Palace, adjacent to the Monte de Piedad and the National Cathedral. Several other attractions are within walking distance of the hotel, including the Bellas Artes Museum and the Temple Mayor Aztec Ruins.

Accommodation: Hotel Zocalo Central

08.11.16 Mexico City

(B/D)

Today we will explore magnificent Mexico City, built by the Spanish on the ruins of Tenochtitlan, the Old Aztec capital. The city's historical heart is its vast central square, or El Zocalo. On our tour we will have the opportunity to visit the square, along with the Metropolitan Cathedral, which is the largest church in all of Latin America. We will travel along the famous boulevard Paseo de la Reforma, built during the short lived reign of Emperor Maximilian to connect the main square and his castle in Chapultepec.

We will also visit the National Palace, which hosts Diego Rivera's murals depicting the history of Mexico and is one of the oldest government seats in the world. Our last stop for the day is the Museum of Anthropology, where we will have some time to explore the treasures of the Aztec culture at one of the finest archaeological museums in the world. Dinner this evening is at the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel Zocalo Central

09.11.16 Mexico City

(B/L)

Today we visit the Teotihuacan Pyramids and Guadalupe Shrine. The pyramids are located 50 km north east of Mexico City and include the massive Pyramid of the Sun and Pyramid of the Moon, which dominate the skyline of the complex. This was once the country's biggest ancient city and capital of the Aztec people, who ruled over the largest empire in the pre-Hispanic era. Guarded by mountains, this magnificent city is thought to have been founded early in the first century A.D.

and reached its peak around 500 A.D., when its influence extended down to Guatemala and as far north as present day Texas. With the help of a local guide, we have time to stroll down the 'Avenue of the Dead'. Uncover its many wonders and imagine what life must have been like nearly 2000 years ago. We also visit the Basilica de Guadalupe, Latin America's most revered religious shrine, where the Virgin of Guadalupe is said to have appeared before an Indian named Juan Diego in 1531 and an image of her was miraculously emblazoned on his cloak. We will have time to explore the New Basilica de Guadalupe (the Old Basilica, built in 1700, is slowly sinking) and to see Juan Diego's cloak. Afterwards we have lunch at a local restaurant and return to Mexico City in the afternoon.

Accommodation: Hotel Zocalo Central

10.11.16 Mexico City - Villahermosa - Palenque

(B/D)

This morning we are transferred to the airport for our flight to Villahermosa with Aeromexico. On arrival in Villahermosa we will be met by our guide who will take us to visit La Venta Park Museum. This splendid place is today an open-air museum, which has been adapted to what is thought as the original layout, and recreates lush native vegetation of the region from which information is offered about its characteristics and botanical classification. Various kinds of birds and animals in captivity are exhibited, such as a beautiful and impressive jaguar, and inside a large pit there are a lot of lizards. Among the archaeological exhibits there are a series of colossal heads of strong aesthetic features as well as smaller sculptures. After our visit we proceed to Palenque to visit the archaeological site of Palenque, which is a World Heritage Site that is located 7 kilometres from Palenque and overlooks the swampy plains that stretch northward all the way to the Gulf Coast. Palenque flourished from A.D. 600 – 800, when its influence extended throughout the basin of the Usumacinta River. The site is surrounded by rainforest where toucans and howler monkeys live. It is made of some 500 buildings spread over 15 square kilometres, of which only a few have been excavated. We will explore the magnificent ruins, including the Temple of the Inscriptions, which is the tallest and stateliest of Palenque's buildings. We also inspect the Temple of the Sun and The Palace, with its maze of corridors and rooms. Our accommodation this evening is a retreat that has been inspired by the tropical forest and is located a few miles from spectacular landscapes, lakes and waterfalls. Dinner tonight is at the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel Villa Mercedes

11.11.16 Palenque – Campeche

(B/L)

Today we depart Palenque and head towards Campeche on the Gulf Coast. Along the way we stop at the natural reserve of Laguna de Terminos and at the small fishing village of Isla Aguada. Here we take a 1½ hour boat tour through the lagoon. We should see plenty of dolphins and perhaps even the very shy Manatees. We also stop at an island in the lagoon to see the local flora and fauna. After the boat tour we board the bus and continue towards Campeche stopping en route for an included lunch. Upon arrival in Campeche we enjoy a panoramic tour of this colourful walled city, with its UNESCO World Heritage historical centre, full of colourful houses surrounded by the colonial city wall and defence towers from an era when Campeche had to defend itself against frequent attacks from pirates. Our hotel is situated close to Campeche Cathedral, the Central Market and Puerta de Tierra.

Accommodation: Hotel Plaza Campeche

12.11.16 Campeche – Uxmal – Cabah - Merida

(B/L)

This morning we drive to the so called Puuc Region, which means 'hilly landscape' in the Mayan language. Here we will find Uxmal and Cabah, two very interesting archaeological sites. The Puuc culture exhibited a highly decorative expression in their architecture. At Uxmal we will see the Pyramid of the Dwarf, the Nun's Quadrangle, the Governor's Palace and other sites, where beautiful stone relief masks and ceremonial patterns cover the facades. In Cabah we will be led through an ancient Maya White Path to discover the décor and stone art in the façade of Codz Pop temple, full of amazing masks and patterns. We enjoy lunch at a local restaurant near the sites. In the late afternoon we travel to our hotel in Merida for an overnight stay. Our hotel this evening is set in a restored Art Deco

mansion. Merida Cathedral and Plaza Grande Square at located just two blocks away.

Accommodation: Hotel Casa del Balam

13.11.16 Merida - Chichen Itza - Tulum

(B/L)

Today should be a highlight of our time in Mexico as we travel 120kms east of Merida to visit the archaeological site of Chichen Itza, One of the New Seven Wonders of the World. Chichen Itza is the best restored of the Yucatan's Mayan sites. We will explore the following magnificent ruins which are set in a dense jungle:

- Pyramid of Kukulcan, which has a striking geometric design.
- The Great Ball Court, the largest and most impressive in Mesoamerica.
- The Sacred Cenote, a natural well used for human sacrifice.

We will also see many other beautiful temples.

Afterwards we travel to Ikkil to enjoy a swim (if you wish) in a Cenote (underwater sinkhole). After an included lunch at a local restaurant, we continue to the white sandy beaches of Tulum for a two night stay at our beachfront hotel.

Accommodation: Los Liros Hotel (garden view)

14.11.16 Tulum

(B)

Today is at leisure to enjoy the magnificent beaches and crystal clear waters of the Riviera Maya. Apart from its excellent beaches, Tulum possesses some impressive Cenotes (underwater sinkholes) which offer fantastic snorkelling opportunity. An optional tour to the Mayan ruins may also be available.

Accommodation: Los Liros Hotel (garden view)

15.11.16 Tulum - Cancun - Havana, Cuba

(B)

Today we are transferred to Cancun airport for our flight to Havana, Cuba with Aeromexico. Havana is Cuba's capital and the largest city in the Caribbean. It is Cuba's political, cultural and economic hub. Founded in 1519, Havana was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1982. The city offers all kinds of attractions, hotels, restaurants, universities, modern hospitals, theatres, cinemas, zoo, aquarium, botanical gardens, museums and an incredible nightlife.

Upon arrival in Havana we are met and transferred to our hotel for a three night stay. Located in Vedado, a modern district in Havana, our five star hotel is considered to be one of the best in Havana and provides an elegant and modern design with Cuban marble and references to the world of cigars and the famous Cohiba brand.

Accommodation: Melia Cohiba

16.11.16 Havana

(B/L)

Today we walk along Havana's busiest street 'Calle Obispo' and tour around the four most fascinating squares in Old Havana, Plaza de la Catedral, Plaza Vieja, Plaza de Armas and Plaza San Francisco de Asis. We will have an included lunch in a local restaurant in the old town. In the afternoon we enjoy a panoramic tour around the 'modern' part of Havana in an American vintage car. The tour includes Revolution Square, the fortress El Morro and the legendary Hotel Nacional.

Accommodation: Melia Cohiba

17.11.16 **Havana – Vinales - Havana**
(B/L) Today we will travel to the west of Cuba to see the small village of Vinales in the Pinar del Rio province. Vinales is located in a valley of the same name. It possesses some of Cuba's most dramatic landscapes and is the world's best tobacco growing region. The beautiful, fertile valley is surrounded by unusual limestone outcrops known as Mogotes. A visit here is a great way of gaining an insight into life in rural Cuba. We will be served a traditional Cuban lunch. We will visit a cigar factory and a working tobacco farm to learn about the lifestyle of local farmers as well as the growing of tobacco. In Vinales there is an included visit to the Mural de Prehistorica, where a history of evolution is painted in bright colours on the side of a Mogote. We also have an underground boat ride in the Cueva del Indio, one of Vinales many fascinating caves. Afterwards we return to Havana.
Accommodation: Melia Cohiba

18.11.16 **Havana - Cienfuegos - Trinidad**
(B/D) This morning we travel approximately four hours south east of Havana to Trinidad. Along the way we will see several spectacular Caribbean beaches. We stop in Cienfuegos where we have a guided tour of this laid back maritime city known as the 'Pearl of the South'. We walk through the city's well preserved colonial centre and learn about its proud musical tradition and its famous musicians such as Beny More. Afterwards we follow the panoramic coastal road to Trinidad. Our hotel for the next two nights is situated outside of the city, alongside the finest and clearest bluewater beaches. Our stay at Brisas Trinidad del Mar includes a welcome cocktail and well as breakfast, lunch and dinner at the buffet or a la carte restaurants, a snack bar, as well as unlimited national and international drinks at one of the three hotel bars.
Accommodation: Brisas Trinidad del Mar

19.11.16 **Trinidad**
(B/L/D) Trinidad is often referred to as the soul of Cuba and is usually considered one of the main highlights of the island. Today will include a waking tour of the main sights of the city. The city was founded in 1514 by the Spanish conquistador Deigo Velasquez and became a major centre for trading sugar and slaves for almost 200 years. The wealth generated by the land owners during this region's dark past is reflected by the well-restored colonial architecture which is found in Trinidad's colonial centre and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988. After walking the cobble-stoned colonial heart of Trinidad we return to our hotel for lunch and an afternoon at leisure.
Accommodation: Brisas Trinidad del Mar

20.11.16 **Trinidad – Santa Clara – Havana**
(B/L/D) Today we head back to Havana. En route we stop at the town of Santa Clara, a key centre in the Cuban Revolution. Upon entering Santa Clara there is a huge statue of Ernesto Che Guevara, to commemorate his death and that of the revolutionaries that died along with him in Bolivia. There is also a museum here dedicated to his amazing life (entrance at own expense). We enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before continuing on to Havana for an overnight stay. This evening we have a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.
The Hotel Telegrafo is Cuba's oldest hotel and first opened its doors to the public around 1860, some years after the first telegraph station was established in the

country. The hotel moved to its present location in 1888. Circa 1914 the hotel rooms and restaurant boasted telephones that afforded guests both national and international telephone services, at a time when even public restrooms were a rare and novel luxury.

Accommodation: Hotel Telegrafo or similar

21.11.16 Havana - Mexico City - Dallas, USA

We have an early morning transfer to the airport for our flight to Mexico City. Depart Havana at 7.15am on Aeromexico flight AM 454, arriving in Mexico City at 8.25am.

Then depart Mexico City at 2.20pm on American Airlines flight AA 389, arriving in Dallas Fort Worth Airport at 4.55pm. Upon arrival we are met and transferred to our Dallas hotel for an overnight stay.

Accommodation: Sheraton Dallas North

22.11.16 Dallas - Sydney

(B)

This morning is at leisure in Dallas. Check out time at the hotel is 12 noon, after which you can store your bags in the lobby while you get lunch at your own expense. At 1pm we will be met by our guide and taken on a sightseeing tour of Dallas, which is ranked as the 9th largest U.S. city. Dallas is home to many unique modernist and post modernist buildings including I.M. Pei's City Hall and the JPMorgan Chase Tower. We visit Pioneer Plaza, which honours Dallas' cowboy past by celebrating the trails that brought settlers to Dallas. Pioneer Plaza features native landscaping with a flowing stream and waterfall with a re-creation of a cattle drive in the form of bronze statues of longhorns being driven by three horse riding cowboys. We continue to the West End Historic and Entertainment District and the Dallas Arts District, which has significant cultural landmarks such as the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Centre. Afterwards we are transferred to the airport for your flights home.

Depart Dallas Fort Worth Airport at 8.10pm on Qantas flight QF 8, arriving in Sydney at 6.05am two days later (24.11.16 - you recross the International Date Line).

23.11.16 In Flight

24.11.16 Sydney - Melbourne and Brisbane

Melbourne passengers depart Sydney at 8.00am on flight QF 415, arriving in Melbourne at 9.35am.

Brisbane passengers depart Sydney at 8.05am on flight QF 508, arriving in Brisbane at 8.35am.

Please note:

This itinerary is to be used as a guide only and is subject to changes due to unforeseen weather conditions, permits etc or other matters outside our control.

Conditions for Macleay Valley Travel's Mexico and Cuba Tour

Deposits and Payments - A non-refundable deposit of \$600 per person is payable within 7 days of booking. This deposit is not refundable should you later cancel. The balance is payable in full 10 weeks prior to departure.

Refunds and Cancellations - Cancellations after final payment will result in a refund limited to whatever we can recoup from the airline.

Insurance - Adequate travel insurance is essential. We can arrange this for you if desired. Macleay Valley Travel offers Suresave Travel Insurance. Please note that we can only process your travel insurance when we have received full payment for the insurance and the signed Suresave Travel Insurance application form, located on the last page of the Suresave Travel Insurance information booklet. Until this time the travel insurance cannot be processed and will not be valid. Macleay Valley Travel will bear no responsibility for any consequences that may occur as a result of an incomplete insurance application.

Passports - All travellers require a current passport with at least 6 months left on it at the end of the tour. Non-Australian passport holders require a re-entry visa for Australia.

A Cuban visa must be obtained prior to departing Australia at a cost of \$110 plus we charge a \$30 processing fee.

Alternatively this visa can be applied for in person at the Consulate of Cuba in the A.C.T. for \$60 per person. A visa waiver is required for travel through the United States of America at a cost of USD \$14 per person. Please note that these prices are imposed by the respective governments of each country and are subject to change. No visas are required for Mexico if you are travelling on an Australian passport.

Basic Tour Price and Taxes - Air taxes and fuel levies are included in the basic tour price if the tour is paid in full on or before the due date on the final invoice. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to charge for any increase in air taxes and fuel levies if the tour is not paid in full by the due date.

Not Included in the Cost - All items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, drinks, excess baggage, tips, meals, (except those specified in the itinerary), travel insurance etc. Similarly, credit card payments can only be accepted if 2% is added to the price to help defray the heavy merchant fees charged to us by the credit card companies. There is a 3% surcharge for Diners Club.

Breakaway Fee - All fully inclusive prices are based on group travel and any deviation from the set itinerary will incur a breakaway fee. The breakaway fee for most deviations including a post-tour extension on this tour is \$115 per person. Please inquire with our office for prices on any pre-tour extensions.

Health and Fitness - Macleay Valley Travel recommends that the passenger is reasonably healthy and/or fit to participate in this tour. Persons with a disability requiring special assistance must be accompanied by a companion. Macleay Valley Travel and their representatives cannot provide this service. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to accept/decline or terminate a passenger's participation in the tour under certain circumstances.

Booking through other Agents - As we keep the cost of our tours as low as possible, there is insufficient margin for us to be able to pay commission to other travel agents, so some bookings can only be accepted if the client pays the other agent's commission.

Accreditation - Macleay Valley Travel is a fully accredited travel agency under the AFTA (Australian Federation of Travel Agents) ATAS - AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme. As such, you are assured of a consumer focused and quality assured business, ensuring professional conduct and ethical business practices. We are happy for any prospective traveller with us to check us out with your local Consumer Affairs (Fair Trading) department.

Twin Share Bookings - If you do not have a travel partner, but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try and assign you with another traveller but this is not guaranteed. We assign passengers by their gender, on a first come, first served basis and do not assign twin share passengers according to their age, profession, interests etc. There are risks with sharing a room with a person you do not know, and Macleay Valley Travel accepts no responsibility if you are incompatible with your assigned room mate. Additionally, if you are assigned a travelling companion to share with and they cancel off the tour prior to making the final payment, then you will either be required to pay the single room supplement or we will try our best to assign you with another twin share passenger, if one is available.

Limitation of Liability - As Macleay Valley Travel acts only as agent for the Airlines, Hotels, Coach Companies etc., providing accommodation, transportation and other services, Macleay Valley Travel shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property including baggage arising out of or connection with any transportation, accommodation or other services, or resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of Government or other authorities, de jure or defacto wars, whether declared or not, hostilities, civil disturbances, strikes, riots, thefts, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations caused by changes in schedules or itinerary, or over bookings or defaults or for any causes beyond Macleay Valley Travel's control or any loss or damage resulting from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents and neither Macleay Valley Travel, and its servants or employees shall be or become liable or responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the tour member as a result of the foregoing causes. Additionally you must meet the entry requirements for each country you visit. Macleay Valley Travel will not be liable if you are denied entry to a country for any reason, including a past criminal history. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to decline bookings made for any group tour. Any tour booking confirmation is conditional, contingent on our view of the ability of a person to be able to participate in a tour without the likelihood of conflict between members of a tour whether perceived or actual.

Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to modify the itinerary or the accommodation if circumstances make this necessary, provided that the amended itinerary is of equal value or greater value than that of the original program.

MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL - BOOKING FORM

PLEASE PRINT DETAILS CLEARLY IN BLOCK LETTERS AND ALSO

A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PASSPORT MUST BE SENT WITH BOOKING FORM

Name of Tour : _____ Departure Date: _____

Passenger 1 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Passenger 2 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Postal Address: _____

_____ **PostCode** _____ **Email** _____

Telephone / Fax Number: _____ **Mobile** _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Nationality: _____

Passport Nationality _____

(Passport must have 6 months validity from the time of tour completion)

Single room / Twin Beds or Twin Share / Double bed: (Room type is subject to availability)

Circle which airport you wish to depart from: SYDNEY / MELBOURNE / BRISBANE

Do you have any existing medical conditions?: _____

Special Dietary Requests: _____

Optional Extensions: _____

Would you like to receive details of our travel insurance?: YES / NO (Please Circle)

In case of emergency, please notify :

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please return this sheet with your non-refundable deposit of \$600 per person.

DECLARATION. I have read and understand fully the booking conditions and I accept them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of passport is required to verify spelling of name. If this is not provided and the information we have for the airline is incorrect and ticket is issued, then the airline will charge a reissue fee.