

Ports & Excursions



Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

Puerto Chiapas is the entry port to the southernmost part of Mexico and the town of Tapachula.

The original name of this city was Tapacholatl, which in the Nahuatl language means "flooded land." According to tradition it was founded in 1486 by Tiltotl, the leader of the Aztec army sent by Ahuizotl to conquer the region. In 1813 the Courts of Cadiz (first constitutional congress in Spain) officially recognized it as a town. They authorized maritime commerce with the rest of Mexico, Guatemala and Peru via the port of San Benito later known as Puerto Madero and today bears the name Puerto Chiapas. In 1920 the Soconusco Coffee Union was established, and in 1929, airplane service was introduced. It was not until the 1950s, however, that Tapachula became modernized.

The city of Tapachula is characterized by its warm climate and traditional architecture. It is the region where the mango variety named Ataulfo was first grown. The vegetation is exuberant and extremely varied; the most representative flowers are the heliconias, hawaiianas, anturios and orchids, which grow in the highest points of the region.

Archaeological evidence shows that somewhere around 1750 BC the inhabitants of the region had developed a hierarchical village society, with larger, more elaborate houses presumably reserved for chieftains. A few decades before the Spanish arrived, the Aztecs conquered Soconusco. The region had been relatively isolated before that, protected from the rest of Mesoamerica by the mountains of the continental divide (Sierra Madre del Sur).

Points of Interest

1 Izapa Archaeological Site

The culturally significant Mayan ruins of Izapa include cobbled pyramids, sculptured plazas and squares, ceremonial platforms and stone-carved monuments that date roughly from 300 B.C. to 100 B.C.

2 Tree of Life Stone Carving

Known as Stela 5 in the Izapa archaeological site, this complex one-ton carving is considered mythological and religious in nature, believed to represent the underworld, earth and heaven, human figures and animals.

3 Chocolate

This elixir of the ancient Mayan gods is still a highly regarded treat. Watch local women demonstrate the process of turning cacao beans into chocolate on excursions to Tuxtla Chico, also known as "Chocolate City."

4 Mexican Cooking

Mexican food and marimba music are synonymous with a fun Mexican vacation. Learn how to create your own authentic fiesta with a hands-on cooking class spiced up with the sounds of lively marimba music.

5 Bananas & Ruta del Café

For a deeper understanding of the local people and landscapes, visit a banana and coffee plantation. Discover the area's history, learn about the growing and harvesting process and meet the workers and their families.

6 Mangrove Boat Ride

A nature reserve is the perfect backdrop for a leisurely ride through streams lined with mangrove trees and filled with wildlife including pelicans, herons and a fish that appears to walk on water.

7 Tapachula City

The impressive history and heritage of this culturally diverse city has been influenced not only by the Mayans, Mestizo's and Spanish, but also by German, Chinese, Japanese and French immigrants.

Special Child Pricing Available!

Children age 12 and younger, savings up to 50%. For actual pricing information, click on tour title or Reserve button.

Sightseeing & City Tours



Most Popular

Izapa Mayan Ruins & Tapachula

PC8-100 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



4.5 hours

from \$89.00

Experience Mexico's ancient past with a tour of the Mayan archaeological site of Izapa. Behold the cobbled pyramids and ten, see many Izapa relics at the Archaeological Museum in the city of Tapachula.



Izapa Ruins & Chocolate Demonstration

PC8-110 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



4.5 hours

from \$99.95

Investigate the ruins of Izapa, one of the most interesting Mayan sites in the region noted for its collection of ancient stone carvings dating from 300 to 100 B.C. Then, see how the cacao bean, the Mayan's favorite treat, is transformed into chocolate.



Maya Tree Of Life & Chocolate Discovery

PC8-115 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



4 hours

from \$69.95

Explore the ancient ruins of Izapa, one of the area's most important Mayan archaeological sites, famous for its alleged source of the first Mayan calendar. See fascinating relics such as Stele 5, which depicts the Mayan Tree of Life. Discover the many mysteries of this civilization as a major cacao producer then visit a local town for a chocolate demonstration.



Culinary, Cultural & Local Customs Demonstrations
 PC8-200 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



4.5 hours

from \$99.95

Indulge in the local cultural customs with a visit to the Garth Norman Center. Discover the secrets of making chocolate, how to cook tortillas and learn how to make a palm fan. Watch a Maya cleansing ceremony before meeting the local children.



Off the Beaten Path

Banana Farm & Community Exploration
 PC8-210 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



4.5 hours

from \$89.95

Get acquainted with a cooperative banana plantation and the rural community that supports it, with a walking tour of a plantation before continuing on a tour of a banana packing plant. To follow, visit an elementary school. Meet the children, their teachers and several social workers before your return to the ship.

Special Interests



Mexican Culinary Class, Music & Culture
 PC8-250 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



4.5 hours

from \$129.95

Spice up your vacation with a hands-on cooking class. Learn how to make Mexican favorites like quesadillas, guacamole and an authentic fish dish baked with in a spicy tomato sauce. After you've enjoyed your delicious meal, move your feet to the beat of performers as they play lively marimba music.



Folk Art, Tequila and Mezcal Tasting & Tapachula
 PC8-270 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will see:



4 hours

from \$159.95

Learn how tequila is made and how to appreciate the subtle differences in Mexico's national drink in a local restaurant. Following a brief history lesson, you'll enjoy a taste of the country's best tequilas and Mezcal. Then head to the culturally diverse city of Tapachula for independent shopping or exploring.

Nature & Wildlife



Mangrove Boat Ride & Nature Exploration
 PC8-610 | Puerto Chiapas, Mexico

You will visit:



5.5 hours

from \$85.95

Get off the beaten track and experience nature and wildlife with a boat ride through the mangrove streams and lagoon of a local nature reserve. Learn about the area's eco-system and watch out for colorful flora and fauna as you cruise along the picturesque waterway.