

EXPLORING THE CULINARY DELIGHTS OF MEXICO

BY CLAUDIA ROYSTON, GLOBAL GOURMANDS

GASTRONOMY IN MEXICO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qAwPMWBpcs>

Exploring the food culture of another country is the best way to go beyond beaches and nightlife to experience a destination more authentically. Food connects us to places and has the ability to peel away differences and language barriers.



One of the most emblematic countries of the growing trend in culinary travel is Mexico. (According to the government's National Travel & Tourism Office, travel to Mexico is up 9% over last year.) It has so much more than sun-kissed beaches with their beautiful hotels and resorts. From taco stands to the finest kitchens of Mexico's best chefs, the aromatic food, wine, and spirits of Mexico tantalize the taste buds of visitors from all over the world.



To Christopher Columbus, the New World was a storehouse of culinary gold, and from Mexico comes the pepper, corn, squash, beans, chocolate, avocado and more. Each of these ingredients was exported around the globe and changed the culinary history of the world.



Most Mexican food has historical roots in pre-Aztec times, and learning about its traditional ingredients and preparation techniques is fascinating. But its modern cuisine has many global influences. In addition to the well-known Spanish connection, it is easy to see French, Caribbean, Middle-Eastern and Central and South American influences. Some areas of Mexico developed in relative isolation from each other, accounting for very different flavors to enjoy as you explore.



There are many destinations in Mexico with a unique food culture, but here are three of our favorites:

YUCATAN - Yucatecan cuisine is largely a result of its constant interaction with Europe, Cuba and New Orleans via its ports. An exquisite combination of condiments and spices like pumpkin seed, oregano, purple onion, sour orange, achiote, sweet pepper, cilantro, habanero and xcatic

peppers, produces the famous Yucatecan cuisine. It contains a variety of scents and colors with dishes ranging from cochinta pibil, panuchos, salbutes, poc chuc, lime soup, to delicious relleno negro and queso relleno.

And dotted around the Yucatan are charming colonial towns, significant Mayan sites of Uxmal and Chichen Itza, and ceynotes to cool off after a day of exploring. You can also find the wonderful Choco-Story museum in Uxmal that tells the story of chocolate and its role in Mayan culture and food, complete with ceremonies and a wonderful chocolate shop.





OAXACA - Oaxaca is the most mountainous and ethnically-diverse state in Mexico. It is an architectural gem full of fantastic museums, magical



festivals and a lot to see and do. It is also revered as the culinary capital of Mexico, packed with inexpensive markets and five-star restaurants. (It's home to one of the top 50 restaurants in the world, Casa Oaxaca, known for producing traditional yet sophisticated dishes that are typical of the region.)

Oaxacan food is often bursting with color and flavor, and in its markets you can find many native and organic ingredients that are used to make dishes that are proudly traditional. It's also known for its more unusual delicacies such as grasshoppers, but it's the capital city of mole with seven different types that can have up to thirty ingredients and take several days to make.



Finding time to try all seven is definitely worth it! Also famous in Oaxaca are tlayudas (thin Oaxaqueño 'pizzas'), spicy hot chocolate and asado (barbecue) grilled in smokey market stalls. Mezcal is a potent liquor made only in Oaxaca from the rare maguey agave - another "must try".



MEXICO CITY

Designated the New York Times #1 destination for 2016, it's clear the word is getting out about what a magnificent destination this is. You can get guided market tours where you discover the history and preparation of the food items or a first-hand look at how tortillas are made in the traditional way. Just as in Aztec times, markets remain a vital component of Mexico City's social and culinary scene. Some of the best food anywhere in the city can be found in the sprawling markets that provide seemingly endless opportunities for shopping and trying out the latest edible concoctions.



Today, you can find restaurants offering molecular and fusion cuisine, but it's the traditional Mexican ingredients that are the most popular among the city's chefs - leading to the growth of high-end restaurants that rethink classic Mexican dishes. It is through this movement that you can discover the amazing flavors and history of one of the most unique cuisines in the modern world. In fact, UNESCO added Mexican cuisine to their register of Intangible Cultural Heritage list in 2010.



The search for an authentic Mexico experience is growing quickly as luxury clients seek experiential holidays. From accommodations to destinations to experiences and sightseeing, they will not be disappointed.

We heartedly encourage you to experience the gastronómico of Mexico in 2016. Elements of Mexican food will be totally familiar to you, but others will be completely unexpected. Exploring the cuisine of Mexico will bring you closer to its wonderful people, their history and culture, and reveal what contemporary Mexico is all about. Our tours include unique and special access experiences: touring colorful markets, cooking classes, tequila and wine tastings and excellent sightseeing. Fine dining, rustic eateries, and meals with families are also an important part.



For more information about culinary tours to Mexico visit: <http://globalgourmands.com>

SOURCE: <http://globalgourmands.com>