



VANDERBILT
Alumni Association



Great Mayan Annular Eclipse

YUCATÁN, MÉXICO | OCTOBER 6-15, 2023

CANCÚN | COBÁ | CHICHÉN-ITZÁ | EK BALAM | MÉRIDA | UXMAL | KABAH | EDZNÁ | CAMPECHE



Dear Vanderbilt Alumni, Family and Friends,

Take an opportunity to see a spectacular annular solar eclipse while visiting ancient Mayan ruins. On October 14, 2023, a ring of fire will reign for over 4 minutes high above the darkened skies of Campeche. This exclusive 10-day tour will survey the remarkable archeological ruins, cuisine, and culture of the Yucatán. Few pre-Columbian civilizations attained the celestial sophistication of the Maya in Mesoamerica. Their astronomer-priests looked to the heavens for guidance and developed the most intricate and accurate calendar in the ancient world. Ceremonial buildings were precisely aligned with compass directions including fleeting solar equinox alignments. You'll also learn about the Chicxulub impact crater formed when an asteroid hit the Gulf of Mexico 66 million years ago and wiped out most of Earth's life forms, including dinosaurs.

Your adventure begins in colorful Cancún on October 6th. Then you'll make your way across the peninsula to visit the most revered and historic Maya sites—Cobá, Chichén Itzá (and its famed El Castillo and El Caracol

Observatory), Ek Balam, Uxmal, Kabah, and Edzná. You'll also explore the vibrant capital city of Mérida and the historic coastal town of Campeche and even get the chance to swim in one of the region's *cenotes* or groundwater-filled sinkholes.

Secure your space on this unique tour to witness this once-in-a-lifetime annular eclipse in the land of the Maya.

Sincerely,

Cary Dewitt Allyn
Director, Vanderbilt Travel

The Vanderbilt Travel Program strives to engage Vanderbilt alumni, parents, and friends of all ages, keeping them connected with each other and the mission of Vanderbilt. Each carefully designed trip offers unparalleled educational opportunities, many with Vanderbilt professors, for an exclusive "beyond the classroom" experience.



LEFT: STATUE AT CAMPECHE
INSET TOP: COLORFUL HOUSES IN MÉRIDA / BOTTOM: ANNULAR ECLIPSE



Study Leader

EDWARD WRIGHT-RIOS ❖ Mellon Foundation Chair in the Humanities Professor of History

Edward Wright-Rios is a cultural historian specializing in modern Mexico. He is currently a Guggenheim Fellow (2018-2019), and on sabbatical, researching and writing a book on pilgrimage in southern Mexico—*Devotion in Motion: Pilgrimage in Modern Mexico*. Professor

Wright-Rios teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on colonial and modern Latin America, reform and revolution, Mexico, popular culture, the social and cultural impact of the drug trade, and religious change. He has given lectures

on Mexican art, dance, and politics at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts. He also led a professional development program for public school teachers in Mexico for Vanderbilt's Center for Latin American Studies. Professor Wright-Rios has enjoyed the support of the Fulbright Foundation, the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States, and Vanderbilt's Center for the Americas and the Division for Sponsored Research. He was also awarded the Charles A. Ryskamp Fellowship administered by the American Council of Learned Societies in 2011.



BELOW: SWIMMING IN THE CENOTÉ / INSET: FLOWER CART IN MÉRIDA





Itinerary

(B=BREAKFAST, L=LUNCH, D=DINNER)

DAY 1 | Friday, Oct 6

U.S. ✦ CANCÚN

Fly to Cancún. Transfer to our hotel near the airport. We'll meet in the early evening at the reception area for a briefing on tomorrow's departure. **COURTYARD MARRIOTT**

DAY 2 | Saturday, Oct 7

CANCÚN ✦ COBÁ ✦ CHICHÉN ITZÁ

We'll depart after breakfast to visit the archaeological site of Cobá. Its jungle setting is home to a variety of animals and birds and has the tallest pyramid on the peninsula. We continue to Chichén Itzá, one of the finest Maya archaeological sites in the northern Yucatan Peninsula often called one of the "seven wonders" of the world. Welcome dinner with cocktails. **HOTEL MAYALAND. (B,L,D)**

DAY 3 | Sunday, Oct 8

CHICHÉN ITZÁ

We'll have the option to arise early for a sunrise tour of Chichén Itzá before the park opens to the public. The site contains massive structures including the immense El Castillo pyramid, a symbolic representation of the Maya calendar. Built sometime in the 7th

century El Castillo, actually had an astronomical purpose! It's actually a solar calendar. Chichén Itzá has another astronomical structure—El Caracol, also known as the Observatory as it bears a striking resemblance to modern astronomical observatories. The windows and doors in the El Caracol Observatory are specifically aligned with the movements of the sun, stars, and planets, particularly Venus. **HOTEL MAYALAND (B,L,D)**

DAY 4 | Monday, Oct 9

EK BALAM ✦ CENOTE MAYA

This morning we'll visit the Late Classical period Maya ruins of Ek Balam which means black jaguar. What makes this site unique is the shape of the main pyramid. In the afternoon we'll enjoy a swim in a nearby cenote or sinkhole. A ring of cenotes was formed in the Yucatan Peninsula 66 million years ago from a colossal asteroid impact that brought about climate change at the time of the dinosaurs. **HOTEL MAYALAND (B,L,D)**

DAY 5 | Tuesday, Oct 10

CHICHÉN ITZÁ ✦ MÉRIDA

Today we'll travel to Mérida, Yutcan's

largest city. We'll enjoy a tour of the city's beautiful government buildings, monuments, and shady tree-lined plazas. Next, we'll visit the Gran Museo del Mundo Maya for a lecture regarding the Chicxulub impact crater left by the asteroid that created a million-megaton blast that devastated the Gulf of Mexico region 66 million years ago. Settle in your hotel centrally located in Mérida close to shops, plazas, restaurants, and other attractions.

HILTON VILLA MERCEDES (B,L,D)

DAY 6 | Wednesday, Oct 11

MÉRIDA ✦ UXMAL ✦ KABAHA

Following breakfast, we'll drive to Uxmal arguably the most elegant Maya site. Uxmal is considered the finest and most extensively excavated example of Puuc architecture, which embraces such details as ornate stone mosaics and friezes on the upper walls, intricate cornices, rows of columns, and soaring vaulted arches. Lunch is at the Hacienda Ochil which houses a small museum displaying the history of the henequen industry and the construction of the haciendas. This



CHURROS



afternoon, we'll head south to Kabah the second largest Maya ruin in the Puuc region which features beautiful ornate examples of the Puuc style. We'll then return to Mérida. **HILTON VILLA MERCEDES (B,L)**

DAY 7 | Thursday, Oct 12
MÉRIDA ❖ CAMPECHE

This morning we depart for the town of Campeche, a UNESCO world heritage site outlined by the remains of a fortified wall built in the 17th century to combat pirates and buccaneers. The meticulously restored historic center of Campeche is a colonial time warp. We'll explore the Fortress of San Miguel Museum and learn about the city's fascinating history. **HOTEL GAMMA CAMPECHE MALECON (B,L,D)**

DAY 8 | Friday, Oct 13
CAMPECHE ❖ EDZNÁ SITE

Today we'll travel to the Maya site of Edzná with its smorgasbord of Mayan architectural styles. Later you can explore coastal Campeche on your own. **HOTEL GAMMA CAMPECHE MALECON (B,L)**

DAY 9 | Saturday, Oct 14
CAMPECHE ECLIPSE DAY

We'll meet at our annular eclipse site in Campeche where sea-breeze winds give a sunnier climate than elsewhere over the peninsula. Known as an annular solar eclipse, we'll see a smaller-than-usual moon fit across 95% of the sun to leave a ring—or annulus—around it. Hence the name "ring of fire." The "ring of fire" will reign for over 4 minutes 30 seconds while very high in the sky at 61°. The maximum annular eclipse will occur at approximately 12:22 pm. We'll enjoy a picnic lunch at our eclipse-watching site. After the end of the eclipse, we'll gather for a celebratory farewell dinner. **HOTEL GAMMA CAMPECHE MALECON (B,L,D)**

DAY 10 | Sunday, Oct 15
CAMPECHE ❖ U.S.

This morning we'll transfer to the Campeche or Mérida airport for flights to the U.S. and connecting flights home. **(B)**

Program Cost

LAND PROGRAM..... \$6,490
(Per person double occupancy)

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT \$1,890

Sample Coach Airfare

Nashville to Cancún with return from Mérida or Campeche \$415
(Not included, quoted separately, as of October 2022, subject to change)

Includes

- All accommodations and meals as specified in the itinerary
- All land transportation • All activities per itinerary • Wine and beer with welcome and farewell dinners • Entrance fees
 - Taxes • Service charges • Local guides and tour manager throughout • Airport transfers for group flights • Gratuities to local guides, drivers and wait staff • Baggage handling • Leadership
 - Pre-departure information • Coordination and administration.



Accommodations

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT CANCUN AIRPORT (1 NIGHT)

Located in one of Mexico's most vibrant cities, the hotel is just 3 miles from Cancún International Airport. A restaurant, an outdoor pool, and a fitness center are available. Free Wi-Fi in public areas, and a free beach shuttle. All

rooms are soundproofed and provide free Wi-Fi, flat-screen TVs with cable channels, premium bedding and pillow menus. Also onsite are an outdoor pool, a spa tub, fitness bar/lounge, and snack bar/deli.



MAYALAND HOTEL & BUNGALOWS (3 NIGHTS)

This world-class resort features a unique tropical setting: inside the Chichén Itzá archaeological park. The hotel features views of the famous Maya observatory, a spa, outdoor pool, spacious air-conditioned rooms, bungalows, and suites. Individually decorated rooms feature premium bedding, satellite TV, free Wi-Fi, and minibars.



TOP: HOTEL GAMMA CAMPECHE MALECON

MIDDLE: ROOM AT MAYALAND HOTEL & BUNGALOWS

BOTTOM: EXTERIOR OF VILLA MERCEDES MÉRIDA

INSET: VIEW OF CHICHÉN ITZÁ FROM
MAYALAND HOTEL & BUNGALOWS LOBBY

VILLA MERCEDES MÉRIDA, CURIO COLLECTION BY HILTON (2 NIGHTS)

The family-friendly hotel is a 5-minute walk from downtown Mérida. A restaurant, an outdoor pool, and a fitness center are complemented by a bar/lounge, Wi-Fi in public areas, and 24-hour room service. There are flat-screen TVs with cable channels, Wi-Fi, minibars, and coffee makers in

the rooms. Recreational amenities include an outdoor pool and a fitness center.



GAMMA CAMPECHE MALECÓN

(3 NIGHTS)

This four-star hotel is located on the Yucatán Peninsula, on the Campeche seafront and close to the historic center

of the city. It offers an outdoor pool and air-conditioned rooms with free Wi-Fi.

What to Expect

This program for Vanderbilt University is designed for those who are interested in witnessing an annular solar eclipse, learning about archaeology, astronomy, and the colonial heritage and architecture of some of the haciendas of Old Mexico. This is a moderately active program. Walks in the archaeological sites are sometimes over uneven terrain at a leisurely pace. The area of Campeche is prime location to experience the annular solar eclipse of October 14, 2023. Passengers and an expert in astronomy from Sky & Telescope magazine will be joining us on this tour. We will provide an optimal viewing location to experience this phenomenon.

Please keep in mind that because viewing the annular eclipse will be weather dependent, there is always a chance that passengers will not be able to view it or view it only for a short period of time. Neither Royal Adventures nor Vanderbilt University makes any guarantees as to the viewing of the annular solar eclipse. In order to enjoy this trip, a spirit of adventure, anticipation and the desire to experience first-hand another culture and to explore spectacular natural and archaeological areas are musts. Flexibility is essential, since local conditions may require alterations in schedule.

Program Cost Does Not Include

U.S. domestic and international airfare (quoted separately) • Excess baggage charges • Meals not specified in the itinerary • Personal items such as laundry, email, fax or telephone calls • Alcoholic beverages except those mentioned above • Dishes or beverages not included with meals • Room service • Passport fees • Private transfers • Medical expenses • Covid-19 testing, Quarantine expenses • Travel insurance • Fuel surcharges • Optional extensions or deviations from the scheduled tour • Tip to tour director is at the passenger's discretion.

Terms & Conditions

RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS, AND FINAL PAYMENT To reserve a space on this tour, please mail, email, or fax authorization of a credit card payment or a check made payable to "Royal Adventures" for \$800 per person with a completed reservation form to: Vanderbilt Travel Program, Office of Alumni Relations, PMB 407735, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37240-7735. Reservations are acknowledged in order of receipt. Final payment is due June 28, 2023 and must be paid by check. Royal Adventures CST #2009579-40

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS Refunds less \$150 per person cancellation fee are made if Royal Adventures is notified in writing on or before January 23, 2023. Cancellations received between January 24, 2023 and June 27, 2023, are subject to a \$500 cancellation fee per person. No refunds of any deposits or payments are made on or after June 28, 2023, regardless of booking date. There are no refunds for unused meals, accommodations or other trip features.

TRAVEL INSURANCE We highly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance including "Cancel for Any Reason" because the cancellation penalty listed in the brochure will apply. Trip-cancellation insurance can be purchased through our recommended provider, Travel Insured International; click here to get a quote or call 1-800-243-3174 and mention Royal Adventures #53140. Most insurance plans need to be purchased within 14 days of paying the initial deposit in order to waive preexisting medical conditions as well as to purchase "Cancel for Any Reason" insurance.

QUESTIONS Please contact Cary Allyn or Clay Krebs, Vanderbilt Travel Program, (615) 322-3673 or alumni.travel@vanderbilt.edu or Royal Adventures (925) 820-6260 or 1-800-453-4754.

RESPONSIBILITY Royal Adventures (CST #2009579-40), its owners and employees, act only as agents for the various independent suppliers and contractors providing transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurant, and other services connected with this tour. Such travel and services are subject to the terms and conditions under which such accommodations, services, and transportation are offered or provided, and Vanderbilt University and the Alumni Association of Vanderbilt University (referred collectively to herein as "Vanderbilt University") and Royal Adventures and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns accept no liability therefor. Vanderbilt University and Royal Adventures assume no liability for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or other irregularity which may be caused by the defect of any aircraft or vehicle or the negligence or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out or performing any of the services involved. Additionally, responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury,

damages, or expenses of any kind due to sickness, epidemics, pandemics, improper viewing of the eclipse, weather, strikes, local laws, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature, quarantine, *force majeure*, animal or insect bites, or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws of the country in which they are provided. Vanderbilt University and Royal Adventures reserve the right to make changes in the published itinerary whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant, or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience, or safety of the tour participants. Vanderbilt University and/or Royal Adventures shall not be deemed to be in breach of these terms and conditions or otherwise be liable to you, and shall not provide any refund, by reason of delay in performance, or by non-performance, of any of our obligations hereunder to the extent that any such delay or non-performance is due to any *Force Majeure* Event. A *Force Majeure* Event, in relation to this tour, shall mean any circumstances beyond our control, including, but without limitation, acts of God, explosion, flood, forceful wind, fire or accident, war or threat of war declared or undeclared, acts of terrorism, sabotage, insurrection, riots, strikes, civil disturbance, sickness, epidemics, pandemics, quarantines, government intervention or other unforeseeable events. Limitations on travel arising from the COVID-19 pandemic shall be considered a *Force Majeure* Event. If this tour is affected by a *Force Majeure* Event, Vanderbilt University and Royal Adventures shall be entitled to, and may in their sole and absolute discretion, vary, cancel or postpone any itinerary or arrangement in relation to this trip. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour or to substitute another qualified leader or special guest. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. The price of the program is given in good faith based on current tariffs and rates and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, security surcharge, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Neither Vanderbilt University nor Royal Adventures accepts the liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable airline ticket or other expenses incurred by tour participants in preparing for the tour. The air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. Participants agree not to hold Royal Adventures or Vanderbilt University and/or its employees or agents responsible for any expense or loss caused by their failure to purchase trip cancellation insurance. Neither Royal Adventures nor Vanderbilt University make any guarantees as to the viewing of the annular solar eclipse. As part of the consideration and right to participate in this tour, each participant will be asked to sign a liability release, assumption of risk, and hold harmless agreement.

Reservation Form

Enclosed is my check for deposit of \$800 per person payable to "Royal Adventures" to hold _____ place(s) on the Vanderbilt *Yucatan and the Great Mayan Annular Eclipse*, October 6–15, 2023. Final Payment is due June 28, 2023.

NAME AS ON PASSPORT _____ VANDERBILT YEAR _____ DOB _____

NAME AS ON PASSPORT _____ VANDERBILT YEAR _____ DOB _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____

OFFICE PHONE _____

FAX _____

E-MAIL(S) _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Pay by check made out to "Royal Adventures"; OR
 Please charge my deposit of \$ _____ per person (3% processing fee) to:
 AMEX Visa MasterCard Discover Card

CARD NUMBER _____ EXP DATE _____ SEC CODE _____

ACCOMMODATIONS

- 1 Bed 2 Beds Single
 I will share accommodations with:

I/We have carefully read the Terms and Conditions and Responsibility sections of this brochure and agree to their terms on behalf of myself and the members of my party named above.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Please sign and return this form with a deposit check payable to "Royal Adventures" or credit card authorization to:
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY ALUMNI RELATIONS
TRAVEL PROGRAM PMB 407735
2301 VANDERBILT PLACE | NASHVILLE, TN 37240-7735
PHONE: 1-615-322-3673, FAX: 1-615-343-5730,
OR EMAIL: ALUMNI.TRAVEL@VANDERBILT.EDU



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Great Mayan Annular Eclipse

OCTOBER 6-15, 2023



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UXMAL | KABA
EDZNÁ | CAMPECHE

Highlights

WITNESS the ring of fire of an Annular Eclipse near Maya ruins.

SWIM in a cenote or sinkhole formed millions of years ago from a colossal asteroid impact to the region.

VISIT the UNESCO Heritage Sites of Chichén Itzá one of the "New 7 Wonders of the World."