





# MAIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

RIVERA MAYA AND VALLADOLID

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# ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES NEAR VALLADOLID



# EK BALAM

Ek Balam is a Mayan archaeological site in Yucatan, Mexico. It is located 30 km north of the city of Valladolid, 2 km from the current Mayan town of Ek Balam.

Ek Balam is formed by the words ek ', with which the color black is called and also means "star" and balam, which means "jaguar". It can be translated as "jaguar- dark-or black". Also some Mayan speakers in the region translate it as "lúcero-jaguar".

In the Ek 'Balam List, written in 1579 by Juan Gutiérrez Picón, it is mentioned that the name of the site comes from a great lord named Ek Balam or Coch Cal Balam, who founded and governed for 40 years.

Archaeological evidence has not provided us with any evidence of the existence of such a character. While in the emblem found in stone monument called Hieroglyphic Serpents, it is mentioned just like the name of the site.



# COBÁ

Cobá means 'waters stirred by wind' or 'ruffled waters' as the Mayan city is located on five lagoons. In this site you can see two of them: the Cobá Lagoon which can be seen as you drive up to the ruins entrance and Macamxoc Lagoon which can be viewed once you enter the ruin site.

Those lakes were a fundamental factor for its development and subsistence. With approximately 70km<sup>2</sup> of extension, the city was communicated by extensive raised stone paths, known in the Mayan language as sacbé (white road), of variable length and width. The longest of them with 100 km., reaches the site of Yaxuná, very close to Chichén Itzá.

Archeologists have estimated that 6,000 structures exist on the site, but only three settlements are for public viewing.



# CHICHEN ITZÁ

Chi-ch'en Itzá means "the city on the edge of the well of the Itzáes". It is the best example of the migratory movements that occurred in Mesoamerica towards the early Post-classic, since it gathers features of material culture from both the Maya area and central Mexico, particularly of Tolteca affiliation.

Chichén Itzá was also the capital of a large territory in the Yucatan Peninsula, headed by the league of Mayapán, from 987 until 1200 AD. C. Its archaeological zone is famous worldwide for the play of light and shadow that at each equinox occurs on the stairway of the pyramidal basement known as El Castillo. In this, the sun, as it rises over the horizon, illuminates the west balcony of the base, creating triangles of light and shadow that seem to descend to the serpent head in the ruffle of the arch.



# MAIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN RIVIERA MAYA



# EL MECO

The original name of the site is unknown. According to historians of the 16th century, the name of the site could be Belma. "El Meco" was the nickname of a local resident of the 19th century, he was the caretaker of a small ranch on the beach, located close to the current lighthouse.

El Meco is located on the north coast of Quintana Roo, right on the bay of Isla Mujeres, so it is very likely that it has played a relevant role in the Mayan navigation route along the entire coast. In its early stages, in the late Classic (600 - 800 AD), the settlement was linked to Cobá, as a fishing village of relative importance.



# EL REY

Named after 'The King' stone sculpture found on the site, this post-classic community is a historical location as well as a great botanical garden.

El Rey Ruins located in the Hotel Zone of Cancun is part of an important ancient Maya trade route. Although it originated as a small settlement in early times, it was not until the late post-classic (1200 - 1550 AD) that it reached its most important stage of growth.

According to the investigations, it is believed that El Rey, together with the nearby San Miguelito, formed the nuclear area of a town dedicated to maritime trade and fishing activities.





# TULUM

Sources from the 16th century designated the site as "Zamá", which in Mayan means "morning" or "dawn". The name of Tulum is relatively recent, and is translated as "wall", due to the wall that is preserved there.

Tulum is the most emblematic site on the Quintana Roo coast, due to its privileged location and the excellent conservation of its buildings and wall paintings. Its wall is well known, delimiting the main complex on its north, south and west sides, since the eastern sector faces the Caribbean Sea; It has five accesses and two watchtowers.



## DZIBANCHÉ AND KINICHNÁ

The original name of the settlement is unknown. Dzibanché is the name that Thomas Gann (English military doctor and amateur archaeologist) gave to the site during his visit in 1927. It is a Mayan word that means "wood writing" and refers to the carved wooden lintels located in the openings of the Temple of Building VI, which were removed to guarantee their conservation.

The Dzibanché - Kinichná complex is located in a transition zone between the low jungle of the north of the Yucatan Peninsula and the tropical rain forest of Petén. The settlement occupies an extension of more than 40 km<sup>2</sup> and is made up of four groups of monumental architecture: Dzibanché or Grupo Principal, Central Complex or Grupo Lamay, Tutil and Kinichná, groups that had specific functions, interconnected by Mayan white roads.



# KOHUNLICH

The former name of the site is unknown. The name Kohunlich is not a Mayan Word, comes from the English Cohoon Ridge, meaning “lomerio de corzos” which refers to the existence of Cohune palms, a characteristic species of the area.

It is located just 70 km west of Chetumal and is a fascinating archaeological site both for its history and for its aesthetic value, beside it is surrounded by a unique natural beauty.

The most significant peculiarity of this site is the presence of an artificial irrigation system for channeling rainwater. There are 8 groups to explore on the site and among the most important are: The Acropolis, the Palace of the Stelae, the Pixa'an Group and 27 Escalones (27 Steps).



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# OXTANKAH

In 1937 the researcher Alberto Escalona Ramos named it Oxtankah, a place name that can have three interpretations: "in the middle of three towns", "three neighborhoods" or "a place surrounded by ramones". Ramon is a tree (*Brosium alicastrum*) that blooms in summer.

It is the largest and most important pre-Hispanic city that has been discovered in the bay of Chetumal. It arose during the Classic era, between 300 and 900 A.D. The first Mayan groups settled in Oxtankah around 600 BC. C., remaining there until 1100 A.D.

The maximum prosperity of its socio-political system was reached during the early Classic, when Oxtankah's leading groups acted as rectors of the surrounding populations, reflecting their power even in architecture.



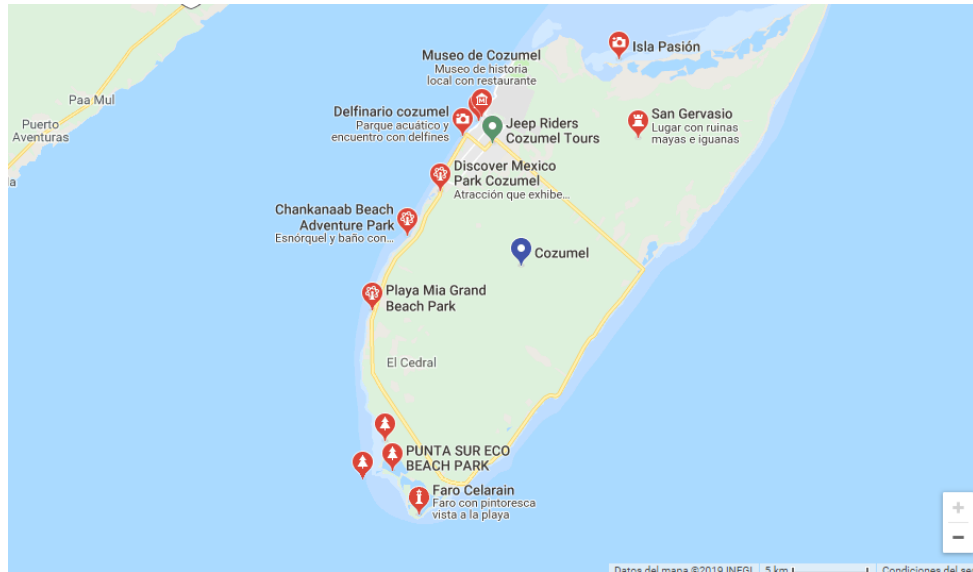
# MUYIL

The original name of the site is unknown. Muyil is the name that has been known since Colonial times, to one of the lagoons adjacent to the site. It is also known as Chunyaxché.

It is a settlement that due to its geographical position maintained a long occupational continuity. The first material evidence corresponds to the Late Preclassic (300 - 50 BC), when it would have had links with settlements in northern Belize and southern Quintana Roo, a relationship that breaks into the Late Classic, when its relationship with the interior of the Yucatan Peninsula and has an important population growth, which is related to the construction of some of the buildings that are currently preserved.



# MAIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN ISLA MUJERES AND COZUMEL



## SAN GERVASIO OF COZUMEL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

The island of Cozumel is located off the coast of the Caribbean Sea, in the state of Quintana Roo, Mexico, has more than ten registered pre-Columbian Mayan culture archaeological sites.

Not all of them are open to the public. The most important is the so-called San Gervasio.

ADDRESS: San Miguel de Cozumel, Q.R.

SCHEDULE: Mon to Sun, 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

PHONE 01 983 837 0796



## NATIONAL PARK CHANKANAAB

The ruins are located inside the Chankanaab water park.

ADDRESS: Carretera Costera Sur Km. 9, Zona Hotelera Nte., 77600 San Miguel de Cozumel, Q.R.

SCHEDULE: Mon-Sun, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

PHONE: 01 987 872 0093





# MAYAN RUINS OF IXCHEL

The history of the Island dates back more than 1500 years when it was part of the Mayan province, Ekab. The island served as a sanctuary for the goddess Ixchel, the Mayan goddess of the moon, fertility, medicine and happiness.

The Temple was located at the southern point of the island and was also used as a lighthouse. The light from the torches was shown through the holes in the walls, which could be seen by seafarers at sea. The Mayans also came to the island to collect salt from the salt lagoons.



SCHEDULE: Mon-Sun, 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.