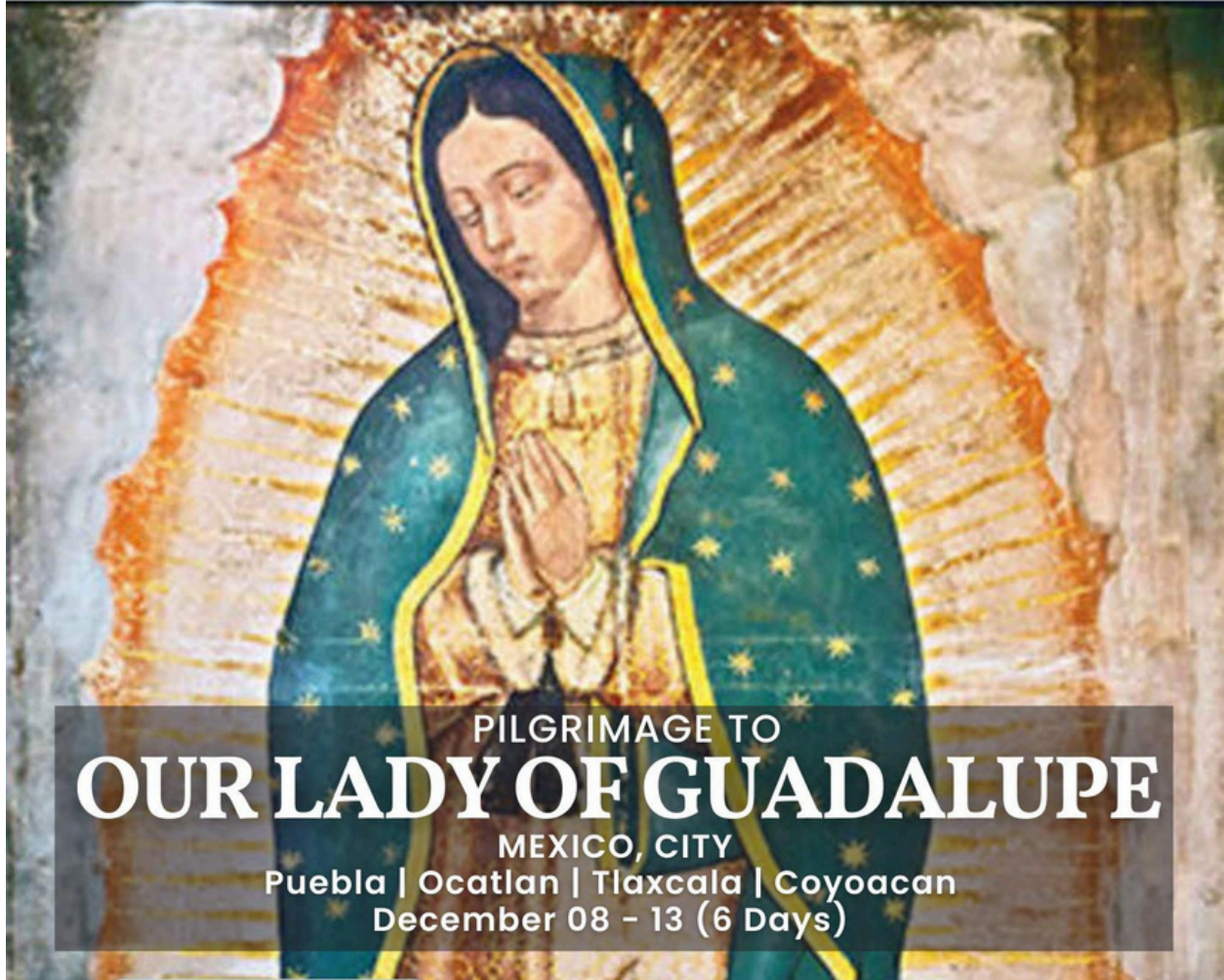




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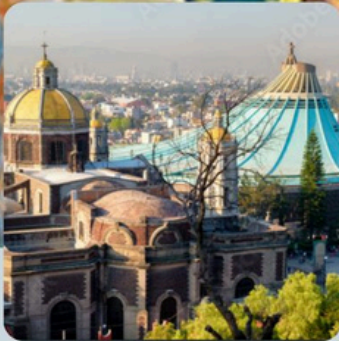


PILGRIMAGE TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

MEXICO, CITY

Puebla | Ocatlan | Tlaxcala | Coyoacan

December 08 - 13 (6 Days)



SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS:

Visits to the Apparition sites of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Shrines and Basilica; the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City, the Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary & the Cathedral in Puebla, Shrine of San Miguel Del Milagro in Tlaxcala, Apparition sites of Our Lady in Ocatlan, and visit the world-famous Pyramids of Teotihuacan & ruins (Pyramids of the Sun & the Moon), Frido Kahlo's Casa Azul Museum at Coyoacan).



ITINERARY

DAY 1: Dec. 08– US DEPARTURE & ARRIVAL IN MEXICO CITY

Depart USA and arrive Mexico in the afternoon/evening. After immigration, customs and baggage claim proceed to our meeting place at Terminal 1 – Door #7. All pilgrims will meet here. If your flight arrives in Terminal 2, please take an Aero Tren (for free) which will take you to Terminal 1. Stop for Money Exchange at the airport. There are several money exchange booths. Be wary of hidden commission costs. Choose the one farther away from the arrival gates, they provide better exchange rates. We found the best rates near Door #7. We will need Mexican Pesos for lunch meals, public rest rooms, souvenir shopping, etc. Lunch is on your own at the airport if you arrive in the afternoon. *From the airport, attend Holy Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.* Drive to downtown (about 30 minutes from the Basilica depending on traffic) for Hotel check-in. After hotel check-in, meet for dinner at the hotel/restaurant.

DAY 2: Dec. 09 – COYOACAN, TEOTIHUACAN PYRAMIDS & DOWNTOWN, MEXICO HISTORIC SITES

Breakfast: 7:00 AM / Depart Hotel: 8:30 AM
Daily Mass: 9:00 AM Basilica of Our of Guadalupe

COYOACAN – CASA AZUL

Today, we will go to South of the City, to visit the Church of St. John the Baptist, in the neighborhood of Coyoacan and the very well-known “Casa Azul”, where Frida Kahlo grew up and subsequently lived with her husband, Diego Rivera.

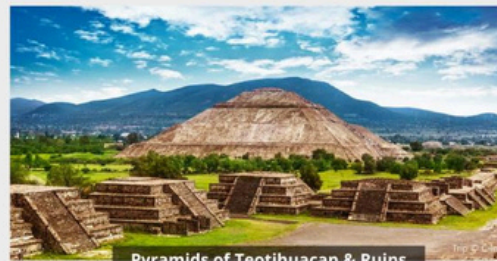
** Lunch at a Local restaurant**

TEOTIHUACAN PYRAMIDS & RUINS

After our late lunch, we will visit the world-famous Pyramids of Teotihuacan & Ruins (Pyramids of the Sun & the Moon). In the year 600 A.D., Teotihuacan was one of the largest cities in the world housing more than 75 temples to the Aztec gods. Teotihuacan translated means: Place Where Gods Were Made. We will have the opportunity explore the ruins and those who are able, can climb the pyramids of the Sun and/or the Moon. Return to Hotel for dinner & overnight.

CITY TOUR OF HISTORIC SITES IN MEXICO CITY

We drive to downtown to visit the **HOLY MARY'S ASSUMPTION METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL**, named “Our Lady of Assumption”, located on the Zocalo, the main square. Inside we will visit the Chapel of the Miraculous Cross of Poison. Originally made of white marble, the cross miraculously turned black from absorbing poison placed on it intended to kill the Bishop who traditionally kissed the feet of the cross every day at mass. It is the first cathedral built in the Americas, along two hundred years, therefore incorporating different architectural styles, such as Herrerian and Baroque, among others.



Pyramids of Teotihuacan & Ruins

As centuries went on, Mexico City's cathedral was enriched in the 1700's with one of the most outstanding altarpieces in the Americas: The King's and the Forgiveness Chapels, designed by Jeronimo de Balbás.

We may also visit the central canonical chorus, a place with marvelous wooden ebony carved seats are located. Also, along the Cathedral's side Chapels and altarpieces you'll admire its paintings and sculptures. The vestry is oldest space in the building, where the Holy Original Image of Guadalupe Virgin was exhibited. The building was finally consecrated in 1813.

For those who are able to climb, you can have a tour (about 45 minutes) of the ancient Bell tower on top of the Cathedral and hear about its interesting history. Also, the view on the top is so spectacular overlooking the Zocalo Square and the city in general. Walk on the roof of the Cathedral and see its beautiful arches and other architectural and artistic details.

TEMPLO MAYOR

We will also take a panoramic visit to the "Templo Mayor" archaeological excavations and its Guatemala street and its hundreds of religious articles stores; The church and square of Santo Domingo (Saint Dominic), the first university and the seat of the holy inquisition back to the colonial times; we will also visit the San Francisco and La Profesa churches from the XVI century and drive through Tacuba street to admire its ancient buildings, squares and monuments, the square of Santa Veracruz (Holy Cross) and its leaning churches and stop at San Hipolito (Saint Hipolite) parish church for a visit and see its famous image of San Judas Tadeo (Saint Judas Tadeous), that has converted it to be the second most important and most visited religious place in the city after the Guadalupe Basilica.



Guadalupe Virgin Basilica

DAY 3: Dec. 10- MEXICO CITY: SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Breakfast: 7:00 AM / Depart Hotel: 8:15 AM
Morning Mass 9:00 AM at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe

After breakfast at our hotel, we will travel to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe for Mass. After Mass we will have a slideshow presentation by Jorge Arrendondo (an ex-seminary priest and who translated the book authored by Eduardo Chavez from Spanish to English about Our Lady of Guadalupe. He is currently taking his Masters on Theology at Harvard University). The slideshow presents the historical apparitions of Our Lady to San Juan Diego, cultural and historical background the Mexican people. Then we will have a guided tour of the Basilica, where the miraculous Tilma is housed, and climb the hilltop Chapel of Tepeyac where the history of Our lady's visit to Guadalupe will be related and various points of interest in the Tepeyac area surrounding the Basilica, each associated with the story of Saint Juan Diego's encounter & the apparitions of Our Lady more than 500 years ago. These sites are as follows:

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE APPARITIONS:

- Tepeyac: (Guadalupe Basilica) Site of the holy apparitions
- Tlatelolco: Saint Juan Diego's Christian formation and baptism.
- Cuautitlan: Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin's childhood
- Tlupetlac: Uncle Juan Bernardino's life and the Fifth Apparition – this is outside the Basilica (30 mins. drive)
- Ex Archbishopric: Bishops Palace and the Imprinting Miracle – this is outside the Basilica
- Metropolitan Cathedral: First exhibition date of the original cloth/Tilma (December 12 to 26, 1531) – will visited during our tour at downtown.

DISTINGUISHED AND NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE GUADALUPE VIRGIN BASILICA

Juan Diego's tilma, the sack cloth bearing the miraculous image of the Holy Virgin, is exhibited in the main Basilica. One special stop is La Capilla del Pocito (Chapel of the Little Well) – a well which reputedly opened under the feet of the Virgin.

New Basilica

This building was consecrated on October 12th, 1976. Its modern architectural design is based on a circular plan of One Hundred meters diameter, aimed at a larger audience who are participating in liturgical celebrations, and admiring the beauty of Saint Juan Diego's cape.

Old Basilica

This building was made to honor Holy Mary of Guadalupe and consecrated on May 1st. 1709. Architect Pedro de Arrieta also designed on the front doors a group of high reliefs with the Manifestations to Juan Diego, along with apostles and prophets.

Capuchin Nunnery

The church and cloister of the Capuchin Sisters is the Franciscan female congregation, which was built by architect Ignacio Castera in 1787. This temple, as well as others of its kind, has its doors on the side instead of the front, not facing the main altarpiece. This design was planned to make it easier for the nuns to be at mass without breaking their cloister votes, consecrating their life to Jesus Christ inside their nunnery forever.

Carillion

This singular time machine was opened in 1991. It shows different time measuring methods: On the front it has a civil clock, and an astronomical astrolabe. On the right side is a sundial. On the left side it has an Aztec calendar, used to set planting and harvest times, based on an 18 month or 20 days system. Finally, in the front panel it has a circular stage carillon, where the Virgin Manifestations are shown.

Mary's Square

On 2011 this area was donated by Carlos Slim Foundation to expand the Holy Mary Sanctuary's capacity, and welcome more pilgrims. Here you will find an Evangelization Center, an auditorium, meeting rooms for congress and conventions, a Guadalupianian Museum, a pigeon shelter, columbarium for ash urns, and a large plaza, where different ethnic groups can show their faith in their cultural expressions (dancing and processions)

The Native's Parish Church

This eremite is the oldest building in all the area. It was built around 1649, containing the Holy Cloth before being moved to the Basilica. Its name comes from the fact that Saint Juan Diego lived here his last years and later a brotherhood of Native Americans was founded here in 1679.

The Water Well

There used to be a well, right on the Tepeyac hill slope. For many years, people believed that this was the actual place where Virgin Mary had spoken to Saint Juan Diego. Unfortunately, those who washed their wounds, and drank the water polluted it. Later, architect Francisco Guerrero y Torres designed this chapel around the well. Nor the architect, both masons and other workers charged for its construction, finished in 1791.

The Offering

This group of seventeen sculptures is on the Tepeyac hill gardens. It represents the Native American's homage to Holy Mary of Guadalupe. It is based on two cascades that gather on the dark-skinned Lady 's feet, symbolizing the birth of a new people, originating from Native and Spanish blood. It was opened in September 1986.

The Sailor's Mast

This monument was built on the Eastern slope path, at the same time that the Well's Chapel, remembering a Spanish boat that avoided shipwreck in front of Veracruz coast by praying to Our Lady of Tepeyac Hill and saving their life. As gratitude, the sailors brought the ship's mast to be the axis of a monument. However, in the beginning of XX Century, a strong wind destroyed it, so it was replaced by a more resistant one, made of concrete.



Chapel of the Hill

The Guadalupian tradition recalls on this place, at the top of Tepeyac hill, where Saint Juan Diego gathered the flowers to be the proof to be shown to Bishop Zumarraga, as testimony of Holy Mary of Guadalupe's

Manifestation. However, the chapel was built until 1666, when the baker Cristobal de Aguirre and his wife Teresa Pelegrina, financed a small church to be built. Since its room wasn't enough for the great number of pilgrims that came to see the holy place, a larger one was built in 1749.



Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tepeyac Cemetery

Historical documents show a graveyard around the Hill's Chapel in 1716; today this is a holy terrain for those who rest, close to the place where Saint Juan Diego found the roses to be taken to Friar Juan de Zumarraga. Its funerary monuments are majestic decorated; some were imported from France and Italy, and contain the remains of famous people of high rank, like Santa Ana, Gabriel Mancera and Manuel Orozco y Berra, among others.

Baptistery

The holy sacrament of baptism is celebrated here. Its architectural plan is based on a spiral form and was consecrated in 1991. Inside, an outstanding single piece baptism pile can be seen, as well as relics of father Agustin pro, a Mexican martyr of the XX Century.

Jesus Christ King Altar

On one side of Tepeyac Hill a Prayer's Altar for Jesus Christ King was built in correspondence to its liturgical

celebration, including a path with limestone monuments to the ninth verses of the Gospel. Along the path you see the images of Jesus and Mary's Sacred Hearts, and it ends at an impressive Jesus Christ King bronze sculpture, which is 18 feet tall, representing Jesus on top of a globe, with a crown and a scepter on one hand.

John Paul II monument:

This sculpture was made to remember the Pope's visit to Mexico in 1979. It is a cast bronze large nine feet sculpture, representing the Pope in a blessing gesture with a walking stick on one hand. It was designed by artist Ernesto R. Tamariz, from Puebla city and it was placed between the old and new Basilicas so everyone could see it, upon its inauguration on December 12th, 1981, as part of 450 anniversary celebrations of Tepeyac Hill's Virgin Mary manifestations.

**Lunch at a local restaurant **

Tulpetlac (5th Apparition Site)

After the tour at the Basilica and lunch, we will depart to Tulpetlac where Juan Diego's uncle, Juan Bernardino, was cured. This is the church of the Fifth Apparition. A church is built over this spot and is known as the Church of the Healing. Lunch will be at Mansion Del Jaguar restaurant Juan Bernardino and Juan Diego had properties and land that was inherited from their ancestors, so they had the duty to feed and look after other worker's families' welfare. The Fifth Manifestation sanctuary at Tulpetlac, was built to commemorate Our Lady's fifth manifestation to uncle Juan Bernardino, who was healed from a deadly illness by the Holy Virgin. Here She asked to be known as "The Ever-Virgin Mary of Guadalupe". This sanctuary was built on the place where Saint Juan Diego's humble hut used to be, and where a former chapel was erected before the present one. Return to downtown for dinner.

** Dinner at Cafe Tacuba, one of Mexico City's popular restaurants (Reservations required). They say you can't leave Mexico City without eating here.

DAY 4: Dec. 11: PUEBLA - TLAXCALA – OCATLAN

Breakfast: 7:00 AM / Depart Hotel: 8:00 AM

Mass 12:00 PM at the Chapel in the Cathedral of Puebla

After breakfast, we depart for a full day excursion (2-3 hrs. drive) to the colonial town of Puebla, our first stop. Prepare yourself for a very long day, returning to our hotel late tonight.

PUEBLA (Capilla de Rosario & Cathedral of Puebla)

We will visit first the Church of Santo Domingo whose Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary is one of the most exquisite in all of Mexico with its most famous scalloped gold leaf walls and ceilings. The church and its Baroque-style Capilla de Rosario (Chapel of the Rosary) were so spectacular that they were once considered the 8th Wonder of the World. Visit Cathedral of Puebla for Mass at 12:00 PM; After lunch, we will continue on to St. Francis of Assisi Church where we will view the incorrupt body of Blessed Sebastian de Aparicio, a famous local figure through whose intercessory prayers many miracles have been reported.

TLAXCALA (Shrine of San Miguel del Milagro)

Proceed to Tlaxcala to visit the Shrine of San Miguel del Milagro. It is here that St. Michael the Archangel appeared to Diego Lazaro de San Francisco in 1631 during a plague and directed him to the Grotto and to a well of miraculous curative waters to heal the sick. (Bring an empty small bottle to collect some miraculous water).

OCATLAN (Our Lady of Ocatlan)

We will then drive to Ocatlan (our last stop), where in 1531, the Blessed Virgin appeared to Juan Diego Bernardino. The Blessed Virgin Mary burned an image of her perfections into the trunk of an old oak tree. Ever since, Mary has been honored as Our Lady of Ocatlan, Our Lady of the Oak that Burned. The Shrine of Our Lady of Ocatlan, is also popularly known as a 'Mexico's Lourdes.' Tradition says that in the 16th century, prayers to the Virgin during a drought led to discovery of the miraculous well. The Shrine was built in gratitude for the answered prayers. Today the well draws pilgrims from miles around. Return to Mexico City for dinner at our hotel and overnight.

DAY 5: Dec. 12 – FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Breakfast: 7:00 AM / Depart Hotel: 8:30 AM

High Mass 12:00 at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Today is the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We will go early to the Basilica to try to get in and get seats before the high Mass at noon. The mass and procession will be about 1.5 hrs. Make sure to have a heavy breakfast since we will have a late lunch. The rest of the afternoon will be free time for souvenir shopping.

DAY 6: Dec. 14– RETURN TO USA (FLIGHT HOME) OR FLIGHT TO CANCUN (OPTIONAL)

Breakfast: 7:00 AM / Depart Hotel: 8:30 AM

Time permitting, depending our flight schedules, we can attend the 9:00 Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Farewell Mass); Transfer to Airport for Departure

For those pilgrims with flights leaving in the evening, you can spend more time at the Shrine for personal prayer and devotions or shopping at the Souvenir shops.

We bid farewell to a pilgrimage which will be in our hearts and memories for a long time to come!

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