

One of the most special things about Tulum, and Mayab Center, is that our beaches are home to 3 species of endangered sea turtles. Every summer, biologists and researchers camp here to document and protect the turtles as they arrive to build their nests on the shores.

During the summer months female sea turtles come home to the beach where they were born to make their nests. They leave the ocean after dark, make the slow ascent up the beach, find the perfect spot, and then start digging. Hours later, the turtle will drop 100 or more eggs into the hole, and then bury them deep in the sand.



Because we are located inside the biosphere, we are blessed with quiet, dark nights. Turtles need this undisturbed natural setting in order to feel safe to come ashore and build their nests. We see turtles here frequently during the summer!

Come and learn about conservation efforts in Tulum as well as how to safely and respectfully observe turtles without disturbing them as they build their nests and hatch on the beaches right in front of Mayab Center.

We are offering some special eco and cultural education activities during the summer months to enhance your experience. Following are some options:

Special Turtle Season Vacation Package:

Six nights lodging in our yurt-palapas (double occupancy), guided moonlight beach walk (to look for turtles), evening guest lecture by a local turtle biologist, snorkel trip to Akumal bay to swim with turtles and educational visit to Centro Ecological Akumal, a 3 day bike rental, and breakfast daily.

This package for two people is only \$640.00! The special runs from June 1st through October 15th.

Price does not include airfare or transportation from the airport to Mayab Center. We are happy to arrange VIP transportation from the airport for an additional fee, or advise you about various options for transportation to Tulum from the airport.

The services listed above, and other excursions (see below) are also offered a la carte if you choose. You may also book fewer or more days separately at our summer discounted rate of \$89.00 per night!

Additional Services/Excursions:

These excursions may be added after arrival to Mayab Center usually with one day notice.

SNORKELING IN AKUMAL BAY, VISIT TO CEA - \$40.00 US

The Mesoamerican coral reef, which runs along the Caribbean coast in front of Mayab Center, is the second largest barrier reef in the world. This snorkel trip to Akumal Bay is perfect for beginners. The bay is protected from strong currents and big waves, and you don't need to swim far to interact with a variety of marine life and reef formations. During this trip you will likely encounter: giant black or spotted manta rays, schools of brightly colored fish, barracudas, sea turtles munching on the seagrass in the bay, lobster, angelfish, and many more fishes, and waving and pulsing coral formations.



In addition to snorkeling, visitors can explore the beach town of Akumal, known for its commitment to conservation and sea turtle research. You may visit the Centro Ecological Akumal, to learn more about the local turtle protection programs, shop at the boutiques selling high quality Mexican handicrafts, or relax at one of the local restaurants for lunch. Transportation to Akumal and snorkel gear rental included.

THE SIAN KA'AN BIOSPHERE- MUYIL - \$65.00 US

Sian Ka'an, which means, "where the sky was born" in the local Maya language, has been designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, along with only a handful of other places in the world. This internationally protected reserve includes several habitats, including Caribbean coastline, the world's second largest coastal barrier reef, huge freshwater lagoons, 1.3 million acres of tropical jungle and mangrove, wetlands, dunes, and cenotes or sink holes to name a few. The reserve is inhabited by a variety of exotic plant and animal life; there are 800 plant species, 103 known mammal species and 336 known bird species. The area is an important nesting ground for 4 different types of sea turtles - green, loggerhead, hawksbill, and leatherback, which you may observe in the summer months on our beach. The area was populated by the ancient Maya as well; there are 23 known archeological sites (with relics dating up to 2,300 years old) within the reserve.

On today's tour, we will enter the reserve through the archeological site of Muyil. We will be guided by Pastor Camaal, a professional guide and member of the local Mayan community. Pastor speaks English and brings a mix of traditional and modern knowledge to his guide services. After touring the small ruin, we will proceed into the jungle on a wooden boardwalk trail, where we will identify various local tree and plant species. On the trail, you may climb a tall lookout tower for a magnificent view of the jungle, the lagoons, and the peaks of a Mayan temple off in the distance. The trail ends at the shores of Laguna Muyil, where we will board our flat bottom boat for the tour through fresh water and brackish lagoons, home to several species of migratory birds.



On this section of the tour we will observe the lagoon and mangrove area of the biosphere up close. The mangroves of Yucatan peninsula are a threatened ecosystem- due mostly to human development in the area. The fragile mangrove system is rich in species and sheer numbers of living things, and is extremely important to the broader ecological community.

Next we enter the ancient Maya canals – narrow waterways thought to be constructed by inhabitants over 2000 years ago as an ancient trade route through lagoons and mangroves between the cities of Tulum and Muyil. Here you may enter the crystal clear water and be carried by the light current

downstream, floating amid the mangroves and hanging orchids. We will dock for lunch at the ruins of a Mayan outpost before returning back to Muyil for a picnic lunch.

JUNGLE BIKE AND SNORKEL CENOTE TOUR - \$45.00 US

This tour begins early in the morning with a bike ride through the jungle, guided by Hugo, who will share his knowledge and passion for the plants and animals of this area. The ride ends at Dos Ojos, a beautiful underground cenote with amazing blue water and caverns to explore. Snorkel gear is provided and Hugo will help guests navigate the waters to experience this unique and intriguing part of the geography of the Yucatan peninsula. Once considered as sacred portals by the Maya people, these caverns connect through a series of underground waterways, eventually emptying out in the Caribbean ocean nearby.

MAYAN VILLAGE VISIT - \$75.00 US

On this tour, we will trek out to a Mayan community to meet with the local elders and other members of the village. We will learn about the how they are keeping their traditions alive and have lunch at the home of a local family.