

MAYAN MEETINGS

STATES OF YUCATAN AND CAMPECHE.

The Yucatan Peninsula is comprised of the states of Yucatan and Campeche —as well as Quintana Roo. Over 4,000 years ago these states were home to the Maya civilization, a culture that continues to thrive to this day in its people, traditions, and many archaeological sites. The state of Yucatan is considered the financial, cultural, academic, industrial, commercial, and medical center of the Peninsula, bolstering its economy with tourism, agriculture, livestock, and the food, beverage, tobacco, textile, and leather industries. Campeche, meanwhile, is a player in Mexico's oil industry —its main economic activity— followed by tourism, logging, agriculture, and fishing. A strong infrastructure of meeting venues, highways, maritime ports, and airports make Yucatan and Campeche the gateway to the Mundo Maya, a place where meetings and events or incentive trips become experiences imbued with nature, history, flavor, and culture.



STATE OF YUCATAN

► Merida

Merida, the capital of the state of Yucatan, is also known as the “White City” and boasts a privileged geographic location just 30 minutes from the coast of the Gulf of Mexico: on the one hand it’s the closest point to the eastern seaboard of the United States; on the other, it’s tucked in right between the cities of Campeche and Cancun. This is also home to some of the most iconic remains of the Maya culture including the famous pyramid of Chichen Itza. Along with its colonial treasures and exquisite gastronomy —not to mention a massive investment by international hotel chains currently building over a dozen new properties (approximately 1,200 new rooms are in the works)— Merida comes out on top as a strong contender in Mexico’s meetings industry segment.

■ **WHERE TO STAY.** The city of Merida has more than 4,800 four- and five-star rooms alone, which means meeting planners can find everything from accommodations in gorgeously restored haciendas with 21st-century services, comforts, and technology to luxurious new builds from well-known brands touting the highest quality standards—the latter located mainly in the heart of the city. Merida also offers a number of high-end boutique hotels, ideal for executive meetings and C-suite getaways.

The five-star Fiesta Americana Merida is a favorite for stays in the historic center, as it combines the flair of turn-of-the-century French architecture with the modernity demanded by the 21st-century traveler and a good dose of Mexico’s famous hospitality. This property is an excellent option for meeting planners thanks to its business center and location adjacent to the Southeast Industrialists Club and a shopping mall.



CLIMATE

YUCATAN

The predominant climate is sub-humid, with a small drier region in the north. Average annual temperatures hover around 78°F (26°C) though they can reach up to 100°F (38°C) in May and won't go much below 60°F (16°C) in the wintertime. Summer rains are abundant and hurricane season runs from early June through the end of November.

HOW TO GET HERE

MERIDA

Merida International Airport (MID)
United States: Houston and Miami.
LATAM: La Habana, Cuba; Belize; Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Another five-star property, the Hyatt Regency, underwent a recent renovation and is located in the heart of Merida's commercial and business district just a few minutes from the international airport. The hotel has flexible meetings and events space as well as cutting-edge audiovisual equipment and personnel dedicated to these types of events. The Regency Grand Ballroom is the largest with 6,426 ft² (597 m²) of space with a maximum capacity of 600 people theater style; this room can be divided into four or other different combinations. There are another seven smaller rooms available for private meetings of no more than 96 attendees.

The luxurious Presidente InterContinental® Villa Mercedes Merida was once a late 19th-century mansion. This elegant and well-appointed resort is ideal for business travelers and event attendees, with facilities that include nine multifunction rooms that can be configured to welcome anywhere from 10 to 350 people.

Note: There are approximately 13 new hotels under development in Merida; however, as of press time the authorities had yet to release the brand names.

■ **WHERE TO MEET.** **Yucatan Siglo XXI Convention Center:** Located in the north side of the city, this venue's architecture is reminiscent of Maya architecture and can host congresses, conventions, seminars, performances, and more. It has 123,085 ft² (11,435 m²) of combined space in its seven rooms that can welcome a maximum of 6,500 attendees. It also has a theater and is home to the Mundo Maya Museum, an ideal venue for inaugural or closing ceremonies.

Yucatan International Congress Center: This novel venue opened recently and is located in the city center near the hotel zone. Its modern facilities are not only cutting-edge but are also sustainable and environmentally conscious. The center offers 100,104 ft² (9,300 m²) of total space with a maximum capacity of up to 6,000 people on the lower level and another 2,000 on the upper level.

There are many alternative venues in Merida: thanks to the growth of its MICE segment, the municipal authorities have opened up different facilities for meeting planners to use as meeting rooms, auditoriums, and banquet halls.

The **City Museum** boasts French architecture and offers an audiovisual room with a capacity of 50 people auditorium style, as well as a balcony that can host up to 150 people for a banquet. The imposing and contemporary **Olimpo Cultural Center** has a beautiful and ample central patio that can host up to 400 people for a banquet, while its auditorium has 285 seats for a conference or seminar. The center also has a video room with 85 seats and a balcony available for up to 150 people banquet-style.

For larger events, planners can turn to the **José Peón Contreras Theater**, a venue that can welcome up to 700 people seated and a foyer that can hold another 250 people for a cocktail. An unusual and symbolic banquet venue for up to 250 people can be organized at the top of the majestic **Paseo Montejo Avenue**, which can be closed off and is used for this type of events.

Other alternative venues include the **Dzoyaxché** and **Anicabil Haciendas**, as well as the **Municipal**



Palace, the building that houses the Historical Archives of the Merida City Hall, the Santa Isabel Hermitage or La Mejorada parks. Any of these is ideal for events of no more than 150 guests.

■ **WHAT TO DO.** “The White City” is one of Mexico’s most unforgettable destinations, thanks to a cultural fusion that began centuries ago: this is a city that still preserves the grandeur of the Maya civilization while keeping its French heritage in its architecture, visible in the resemblance of its main avenue to the Champs Elysees in Paris. Every afternoon different public spaces in the city transform into stages, hosting artistic and cultural events for every taste.

Although Merida has magnificent museums and galleries, not to mention an iconic gastronomy even within Mexico’s own culinary arena, its most famous icon is, undoubtedly, the pyramid of Chichen Itza, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998 and named one of the New 7 Wonders of the World in 2007. The ruins are located between the cities of Merida and Valladolid and offer a variety of tours that can be enjoyed pre or post event.

One of the most memorable events to take place onsite is “Kukulcan Nights,” a sound and light show that recreates the construction of Chichen Itza in tribute to the god Kukulcan —also known as Quetzalcoatl in other Mesoamerican civilizations—, the feathered serpent whose head is sculpted at the base of the pyramid. The highlight of the ruins, however, is during the spring and fall equinoxes —March 31 and September 21— when the sunlight creates a giant shadow that snakes down the pyramid and joins the giant heads.

Other amazing incentive trips and tours can be arranged to the towns of Izamal and Uxmal, the archaeological site of Ek Balam, or the Celestun Biosphere Reserve, not to mention the option of taking a dip in one of the many cenotes (freshwater sinkholes) that dot the peninsula of Yucatan.

For more area hotels and convention facilities, please visit our website at: [meetingsalliance.com](http://www.meetingsalliance.com)

STATE OF CAMPECHE

► Campeche

The State of Campeche is considered the safest destination in Mexico and boasts one of the best economies in the country: its maritime ports are among the top crude oil exporters to North America and Europe. It’s also rich in natural resources, which is why the destination also stands out in regards to sustainability: it currently holds 40% of its territory as a protected area. There are 16 archaeological sites in the state that reflect four different architectural styles. San Francisco de Campeche, the capital of the state, is recognized as the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

■ **WHERE TO STAY.** Campeche is home to beautiful boutique hotels and restored haciendas converted into luxurious resorts that offer all the modern amenities while keeping their original ambiance. The Casa Don Gustavo Boutique hotel, styled after a posh 18th-century Campeche residence, is an

AT-A-GLANCE

MERIDA

► CONVENTION CENTERS

Yucatan Siglo XXI Convention Center
Yucatan International Congress Center

► AIRPORT

Merida International Airport (MID)

► TYPE OF DESTINATION

Colonial • Cultural • Ecotourism
Culinary

► **NUMBER OF HOTEL ROOMS 4★ AND ABOVE**
4,822

► CVB CONTACT

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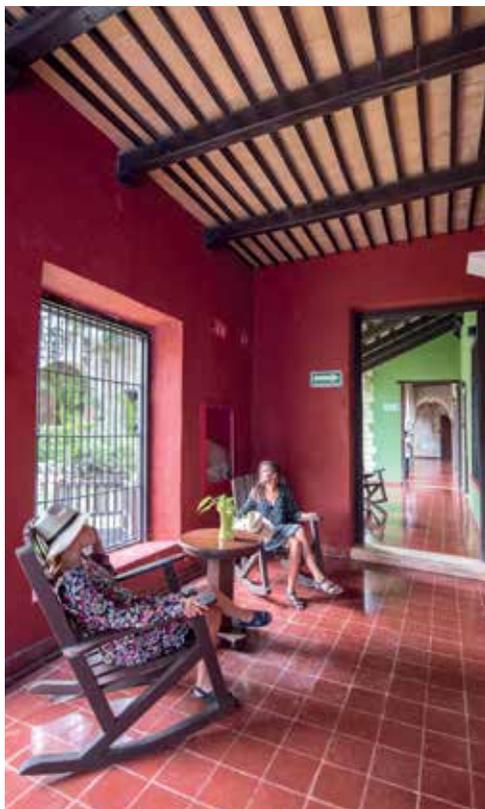
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WHAT’S NEW

MERIDA

Hotel Wayam by Xixim (2019)
Fiesta Inn Express Merida Montejo (2019)





extraordinary space for planners to book exclusive corporate meetings in its Private Salon or Garden Terrace, both able to host a maximum of 30 people at a time, or its Central Patio, which can welcome up to 100 guests for a banquet or cocktail. The hotel also enjoys a privileged location in the heart of the city.

The Hacienda Puerta Campeche, a restored 16th-century hacienda, is a special category luxury property from Marriott and an ideal place to do business or to enjoy a social networking event after a day of meetings.

■ **WHERE TO MEET.** **Campeche XXI Convention Center:** Located right across the boardwalk and the Campeche Bay beach, this venue offers 123,257 ft² (11,451 m²) of total surface area and 22 meeting rooms with space for up to 11,390 people.

There are a great variety of alternative venues as well, including the **Casa No. 6 Cultural Center**, the **El Claustro Cultural Center**, the **Jesuit ex-Convent**—also known as the **Campeche Institute Cloister**—, the **Ah-Kim-Pech Forum**, the **San Miguel Fort**, and the **San Luis Battery**, among others.

■ **WHAT TO DO.** The best way for groups to get a feel for the city's history is by trolley, followed by a pleasant walk along the Calle 59 Tourism Corridor to view the architecture. One of city's iconic symbols is the Puerta de Tierra, the main access to the city through the massive walls that surrounded it and thus the most fortified of them all. Attendees can shop for souvenirs of their trip at the Tukulná House of Handicrafts, where they will find a selection of the state's traditional arts and crafts, includ-

ing its famous hammocks, the "hipiles" (traditional dresses), and the handmade "jipi" hats.

Bahia Tours Operadora is one of the many local DMCs that can take your group to the Edzna archaeological zone. Known as the "City of Echoes," this ancient site is a reminder of the incredible knowledge of the Maya as far as religion, engineering, and astronomy. The destination also hosts a spectacular light and sound show called "Mirror of the Gods" that should be on every group's itinerary.

Incentive travel planners will want to keep in mind that ecotourism is one of Campeche's main attractions thanks to its lush jungles, mangroves, and "cenotes" (freshwater sinkholes), with all the flora and fauna that call these ecosystems home. In fact, the city's north side borders the Los Petenes Biosphere Reserve.

Campeche's museums and historical buildings fall into three categories: those that revel in the Mayan culture, such as the Maya Museum of Archaeology at the San Miguel Fort; those that hark back to the city's history with pirates, such as the Museum of Subaquatic Archaeology in the San José del Alto Fort; and those that focus on its colonial legacy, such as the ancient Campeche Light-house or the city's Cathedral, just to name a couple. Groups will find these glimpses into the past are still very much present in modern Campeche, creating a unique and unforgettable dynamic.

For more area hotels and convention facilities, please visit our website at: meetingsalliance.com

AT-A-GLANCE

CAMPECHE

- **CONVENTION CENTER**
Campeche XXI Convention Center
- **AIRPORT**
Campeche International Airport (CPE)
- **TYPE OF DESTINATION**
Colonial • Cultural • Ecotourism
- **NUMBER OF HOTEL ROOMS 4★ AND ABOVE**
1,016
- **CVB CONTACT**
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