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THE MAYA: HIDDEN WORLDS REVEALED

EXPLORING THE YUCATAN PENINSULA & CHIAPAS

December 12-21, 2026

The Maya world spans five modern countries, and more than three millennia of civilization - from the earliest farmers, to the builders of soaring pyramids and creators of systems of writing and math unrivaled in the ancient Americas, to the modern urban and rural communities who keep ancestral traditions and indigenous languages thriving. **Accompany Brandeis Professor Charles Golden** to learn about the latest archaeological discoveries and explore spectacular Precolumbian cities, experience the magnificent cuisine, arts, and colonial architecture of Merida and Campeche, and discover the natural world of the Maya Biosphere Reserve.

To reserve, or for trip questions, please contact Criterion Travel at **888-328-2089** or email res@criteriontravel.com.





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December 12-21, 2026

PER PERSON, SHARING ACCOMMODATIONS • **\$6,990**

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To reserve online, visit:

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BRANDEIS FACULTY LEADER: CHARLES GOLDEN



Charles Golden is a professor of anthropology and Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs whose archaeological research focuses on the dynamics of civilizations and the rise and fall of ancient states. Since 2003, he has co-directed regional archaeological surveys and excavations in the Usumacinta River Valley, which forms much of the modern border between Mexico and Guatemala. His current investigations in Chiapas have helped to reveal new insights into

the lives of the ancient Maya, and his research team identified the ancient capital of the *Sak Tz'í* ("White Dog") kingdom, previously known only from hieroglyphic inscriptions. This work has been televised by Nature, National Geographic and Disney+, and featured in the New York Times and Brandeis Magazine. He has authored numerous publications on the ancient Maya and co-authored "*Ancient Civilizations, 6th ed.*," a worldwide survey of the origins of states and empires. He earned his PhD in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania and his AB in anthropology and history from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

NOTE: We consider this program to be active. Much of the touring is done by motorcoach, but some excursions may require standing for long periods of time and/or walks that range from one to three miles, often on uneven terrain or over small bridges, where stairs may be unavailable or not have handrails. Daytime temperatures usually range from mid 70s to mid 80s F with cooler evenings, and rain is always a possibility. Participants should be fit and in active good health.

HIGHLIGHTS

- » Learn about Professor Golden's work in the Usumacinta River Basin region with visits to Palenque, Bonampak and Lacanaja Tzeltal.
- » Delight in local crafts at the Sunday market in Mérida and enjoy a private visit to Joann Andrews' home and library, which houses one of the largest private collections of Maya codices in the world.
- » Explore the incredible stone mosaic architecture of Uxmal, and the spectacular sculpture of Palenque, among other gems of Maya architecture.
- » Visit the superb yet less traveled sites of Edzna, Becán, Chicanná, and Xpuhil. At Calakmul, see one of the largest of all royal cities of the ancient Maya, with towering pyramids soaring above the lush jungle canopy.
- » Explore the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, among the largest expanses of intact tropical forests in an ecological preserve spanning three countries. Learn about efforts to sustain the region's diverse and endangered flora and fauna, including the majestic jaguar.
- » Local experts on the region's natural and cultural legacies will enrich your experience of the ancient and modern landscapes.

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

December 9-12, 2026

Enjoy a lagoon boat ride in Sian Ka'an, swim in the picturesque Laguna Chunyaxche, see the colonial town of Izamal, and visit the Mayan sites at Tulum, Muyil, Coba, and Chichen Itzá.

(further details and pricing will be sent to confirmed participants)

Brandeis | TRAVELERS

Please contact Criterion Travel directly with trip inquiries and to make a reservation. Note that each tour participant will be required to review and sign a detailed responsibility and terms and conditions statement prior to departure. Criterion Travel will provide these forms to participants upon registration, and they are available in advance by request.

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