

Oaxaca

Mexico

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Oaxaca is a historic city in the southern mountains of Mexico. It is known for its food, mezcal, markets, crafts and strong Zapotec and Mixtec culture. The centre has colourful colonial streets and stone churches.

It suits travellers who want food, culture and day trips to villages and ancient sites. Three to five days is a good length. The city sits at about 1,550 m, so days are warm and nights can be cool.

When to visit

October to April is dry and pleasant. The rainy season runs from June to September, with short afternoon storms and green hills.

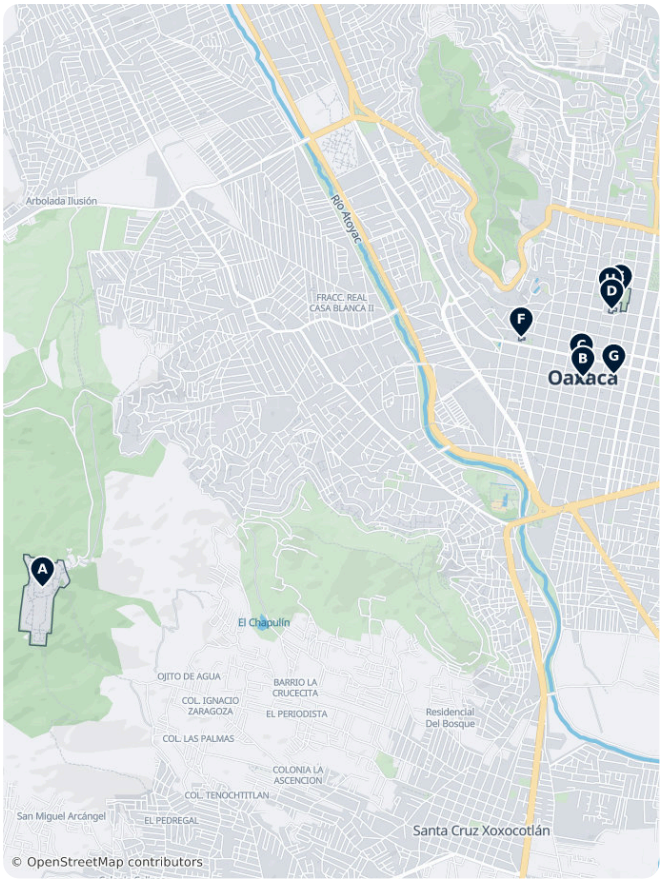
Plan around two events. The Guelaguetza dance festival takes place on two Mondays in July. The Day of the Dead on 1–2 November fills the city with altars, parades and flowers. Book well ahead for both.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 30°	10° / 6°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for sightseeing	28° / 32°	11° / 7°	Dry air · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
March	Great Great for sightseeing	31° / 35°	13° / 8°	Dry air · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
April	Good Good for sightseeing	32° / 36°	15° / 11°	Dry air · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
May	Fair Fair for sightseeing	31° / 36°	16° / 13°	13 rainy days · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
June	Fair Fair for sightseeing	27° / 32°	16° / 14°	24 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
July	Fair Fair for sightseeing	25° / 29°	16° / 13°	23 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Fair Fair for sightseeing	25° / 28°	16° / 14°	25 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
September	Fair Fair for sightseeing	25° / 28°	16° / 14°	26 rainy days · Humid air · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
October	Good Good for sightseeing	24° / 28°	14° / 10°	17 rainy days · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
November	Great Great for sightseeing	24° / 28°	12° / 7°	
December	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 28°	11° / 6°	Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: January, February, March, November, December

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Monte Albán is a Zapotec hilltop city above Oaxaca. It has plazas, platforms and tombs with wide valley views. Go early.
- B Zócalo is the city's main square, with trees, cafés and the cathedral. It is busy day and night.
- C Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción stands on the Zócalo and is the main church of the city.
- D Templo de Santo Domingo de Guzmán is a baroque church with a richly gilded interior. A large cultural centre and museum sit in the former convent beside it.
- E Jardín Etnobotánico is a garden of Oaxaca's native plants, visited by guided tour.
- F Basilica de la Soledad is a baroque basilica that honours Oaxaca's patron saint.
- G Museo Textil de Oaxaca shows Oaxaca's weaving and textile traditions.
- H Museo de las Culturas de Oaxaca covers the region's history inside the convent of Santo Domingo.

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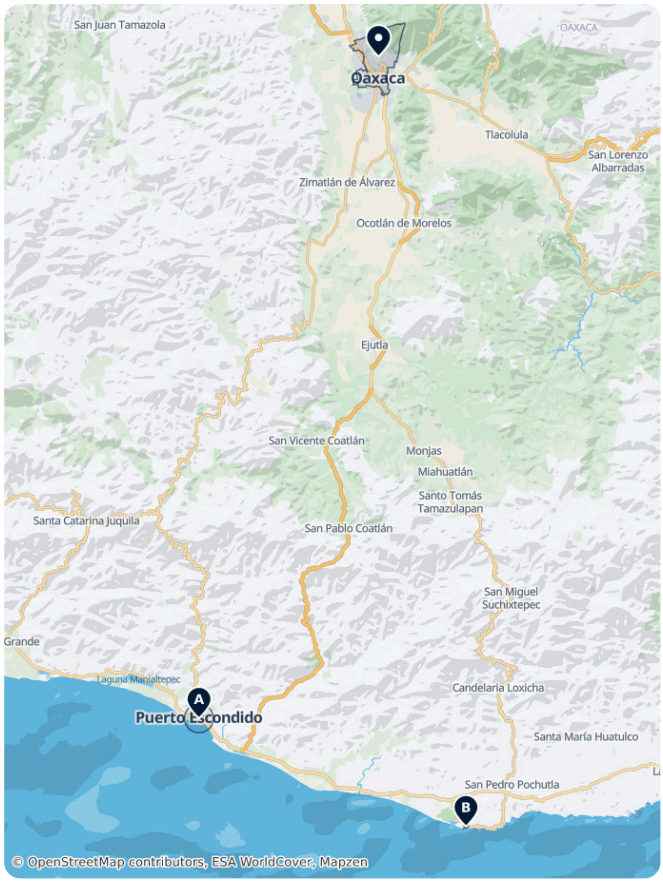
What to experience

- Join a cooking class that starts with a market visit.
- Taste mezcal at a tasting room and learn how it differs from tequila.
- Watch a Zapotec weaver make a rug in Teotitlán del Valle.
- Walk the weekend market in a valley village.
- See a calenda parade with bands, giant puppets and dancers, held at weddings and festivals.

Day trips

Many day trips visit several stops by shared tour or taxi.

- Santa María del Tule: about 15 minutes by car. A huge tree in a church yard, one of the widest in the world.
- Teotitlán del Valle: about 45 minutes. A weaving village known for wool rugs.
- Mitla: about 1 hour. Zapotec ruins with stone mosaics.
- Hierve el Agua: about 1.5 to 2 hours. Mineral rock formations and pools on a cliff.
- Coast: Ⓐ Puerto Escondido and Ⓑ Mazunte are about 45 minutes by flight or 6 to 8 hours by road.



Where to explore

- Monte Alban for the ancient hilltop city.
- Puerto Escondido for surf and beaches on the Pacific coast.
- Mazunte and Zipolite for quiet beach villages.

Getting there

- **By air**: Oaxaca airport (OAX) is about 10 km south of the centre. There are flights from Mexico City and some other cities. A taxi or shared shuttle takes about 30 minutes.
- **By bus**: ADO and other coaches link Oaxaca with Mexico City (about 6.5 hours), Puebla and the Pacific coast. The main first-class station is a short taxi ride from the centre.
- **By road**: Roads over the mountains are winding. Allow extra time.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The historic centre is compact and flat. Most sights, markets and restaurants are within a 20-minute walk.
- **Taxi**: Use taxis for the bus station, the airport and nearby sights. Agree the fare first.
- **Tours and colectivos**: Shared taxis and minibuses go to nearby villages. Many travellers join a day tour.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The historic centre is compact, flat and easy to walk.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Traffic and cobbled streets make cycling less practical.

Food & drink

Oaxaca is the best food city in Mexico for many travellers. Seek out the seven moles, tlayudas (large crisp tortillas), quesillo (string cheese), tamales and chocolate drinks. Chapulines are toasted grasshoppers sold as a snack.

Eat in the markets near the centre, where stalls grill meat and serve tlayudas. Mezcal bars cluster around Calle Murguía and the Zócalo. Many top restaurants fill early, so book ahead.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Cochinita Pibil
Slow-roasted, citrus- and achiote-marinated pork, a Yucatán specialty traditionally cooked in an underground pit.

DINNER

Mole
A complex sauce, often built from chiles, spices, and sometimes chocolate; mole poblano and Oaxaca's several moles are the best known versions.

Chiles en Nogada
A Puebla dish of stuffed poblano chiles topped with a walnut cream sauce and pomegranate seeds, in the colors of the Mexican flag.

Pozole
A hominy stew with pork or chicken, topped with shredded cabbage, radish, and chile, traditionally eaten on special occasions.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Tacos
Corn or flour tortillas filled with meat, fish, or vegetables, with endless regional and stall-to-stall variation.

Tamales
Corn dough filled with meat, cheese, or vegetables, wrapped in a corn husk or banana leaf and steamed.

Elote/Esquites · Elote / Esquites
Grilled or boiled corn on the cob (elote) or served off the cob in a cup (esquites), topped with mayonnaise, cheese, chile, and lime.

DRINKS

Mezcal
A smoky agave spirit from Oaxaca and several other states, distinct from tequila, traditionally sipped neat.

Tequila
An agave spirit from the region around the town of Tequila in Jalisco, Mexico's best-known export spirit.

Horchata
A sweet, cinnamon-spiced rice-based drink, popular as a non-alcoholic accompaniment to spicy food.

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Safety & health

The historic centre is safe and walkable, even at night. Take usual care with phones and bags in markets.

- Road blockades by protest groups happen from time to time. Check the news before a long bus trip.
- Drink purified or bottled water.
- At 1,550 m the sun is strong. Use sunscreen and drink water.
- Mezcal is strong. Go slowly.

History

The Zapotecs built Monte Albán about 2,500 years ago, and it was a major centre for centuries. Later the Mixtecs and Spanish shaped the valley.

The Spanish founded the colonial city in the 16th century. The Dominican order built Templo de Santo Domingo de Guzmán. The historic centre and Monte Albán are together a World Heritage Site. Benito Juárez, Mexico's reforming president, was born in the state.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Mexico at a glance:

CURRENCY
MXN $

EMERGENCY
911

ELECTRICITY



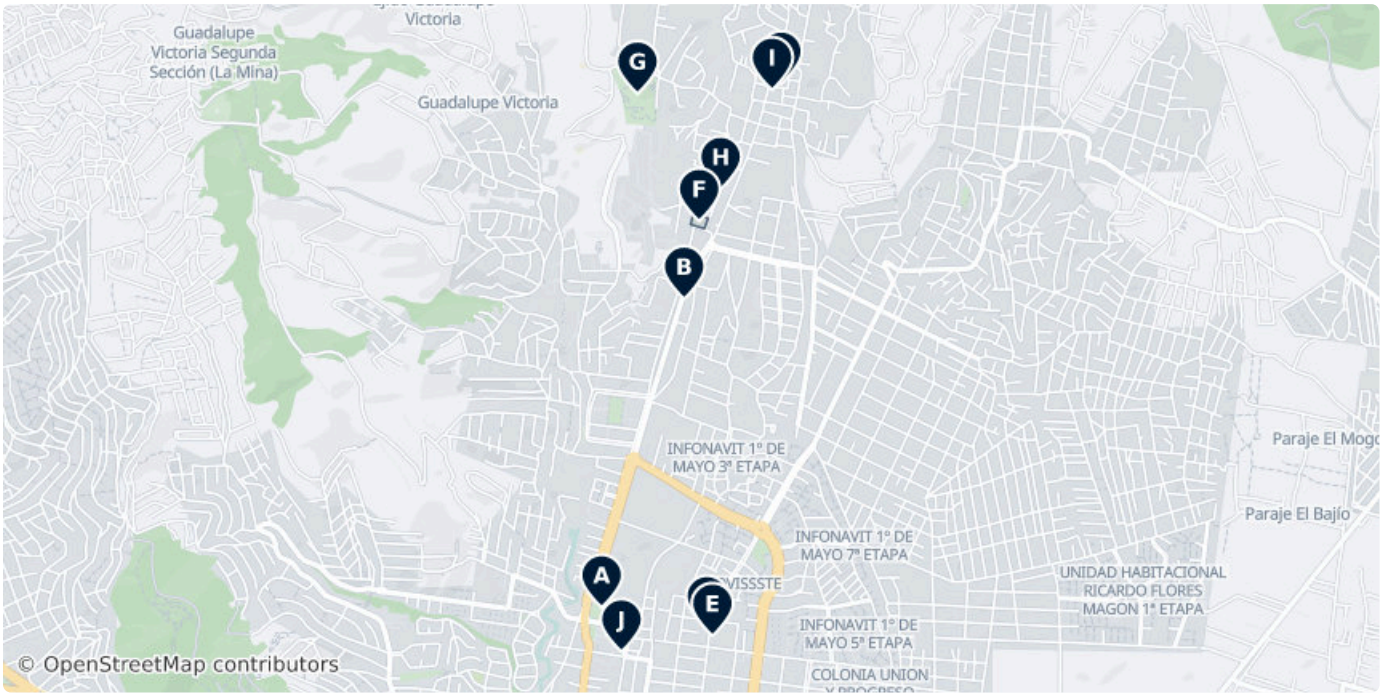
Type A / Type B
127 V · 60 Hz

LANGUAGES
Spanish

TAP WATER
Not safe to drink

Oaxaca Essentials

Explore the northern district of San Felipe del Agua, where Oaxaca's artistic legacy meets historical landmarks. This collection includes the Taller de Artes Plásticas Rufino Tamayo, a center for graphic arts education, and the 18th-century San Felipe Apóstol parish. Culinary highlights feature regional Isthmus cuisine at Yu Ne Nisa and traditional chocolate preparations. The selection also covers significant public spaces, from the Luis Donaldo Colosio park to monuments honoring Benito Juárez and Samuel Hahnemann, alongside the local cemetery central to neighborhood traditions.



A Benito Juárez

Monument dedicated to the Oaxacan-born former president of Mexico, located near the entrance to the San Felipe del Agua neighborhood.

(17.08327, -96.71844)

B Taller De Artes Plasticas Rufino Tamayo

Established in 1974, this workshop offers training in painting, printmaking, and ceramics, continuing the legacy of renowned Oaxacan artist Rufino Tamayo.

Calzada San Felipe del Agua, 68020 (17.09521, -96.71510)

C San Felipe Apostol

18th-century Catholic church featuring a traditional Oaxacan facade and a quiet courtyard, serving as the religious heart of the district.

509A Calle Miguel Hidalgo, Oaxaca de Juárez 68026, Mexico (17.10353, -96.71117)

D Yu Ne Nisa

Traditional restaurant specializing in the cuisine of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, known for garnachas and regional seafood preparations.

1425 Calle Amapolas, Oaxaca de Juárez 68050, Mexico (17.08246, -96.71419)

E La Chocolatería

Culinary space dedicated to Oaxacan cacao, serving traditional hot chocolate, mole, and regional desserts made with local ingredients.

1206 Calle Amapolas, Oaxaca de Juárez 68050, Mexico
(17.08217, -96.71396)

F Panteón Municipla San Felipe de Agua

Community cemetery used for traditional Day of the Dead observances, featuring local burial architecture and floral tributes.

(17.09821, -96.71450)

G Luis Donaldo Colosio

Public urban park offering walking paths, green spaces, and recreational areas for the northern residential districts of the city.

(17.10315, -96.71699)

H Taller De Artes Plasticas

Local workshop dedicated to the teaching and production of visual arts, including painting and sculpture.

Calle del Panteón, 68020 (17.09946, -96.71363)

9514773589

I Las Campanas

Traditional Mexican restaurant known for its outdoor seating and classic breakfast menu featuring chilaquiles and Oaxacan coffee.

100 Calle Iturbide, Oaxaca de Juárez 68026, Mexico
(17.10330, -96.71155)

J Monumento Dr. Samuel Hahnemann

Statue and monument honoring the German physician who founded homeopathy, located at a prominent intersection.

(17.08156, -96.71764)

DATA SOURCES

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