

Uxmal



MAYAN
PENINSULA



THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL GUIDE

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Uxmal - The Ultimate Travel Guide for 2019

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

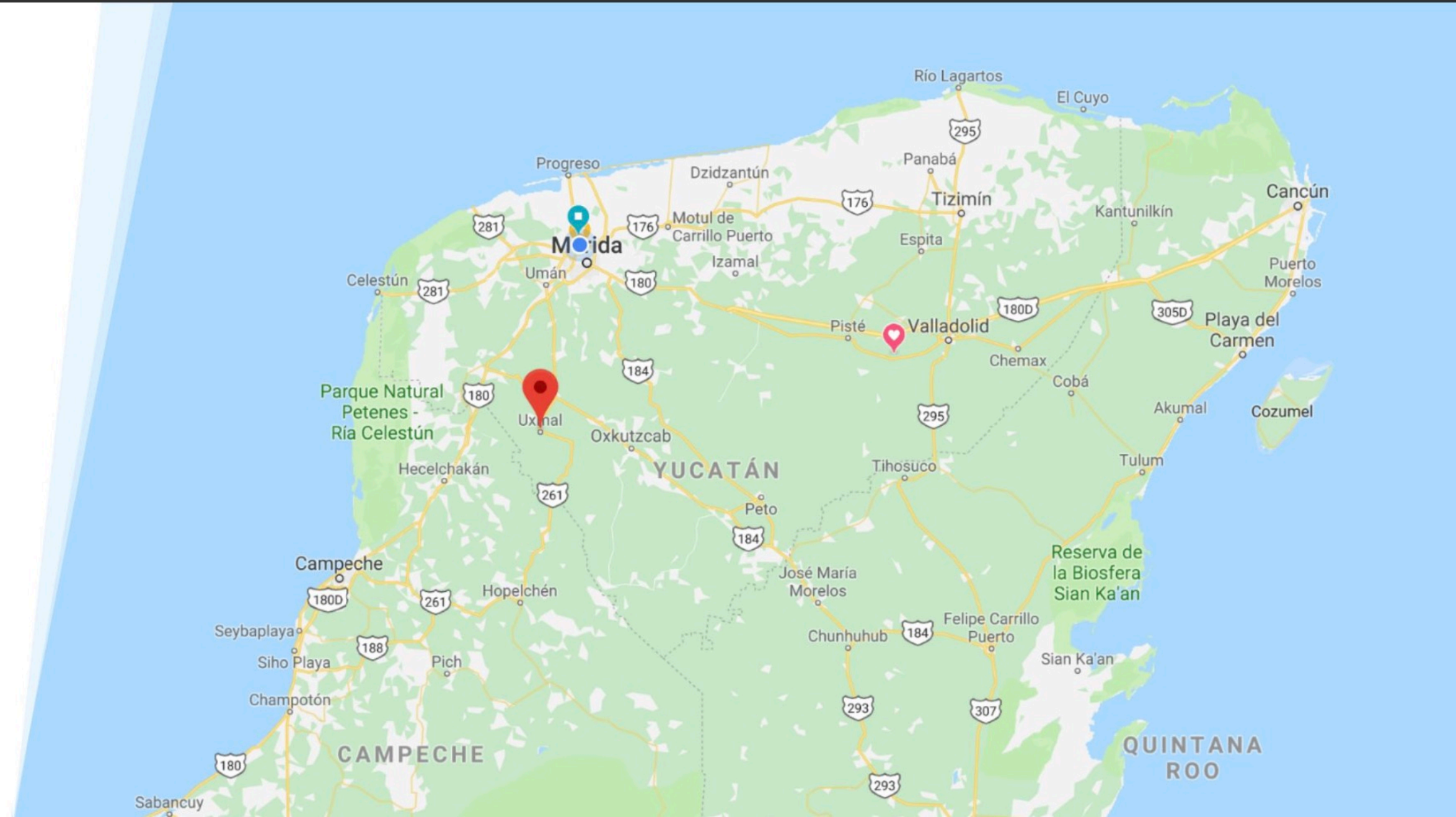
Uxmal is surrounded by legends, myths and anecdotes; poetic in its name, and its history. The occupation of Uxmal dates back to 500 BCE., but it was a political and economic power in the Mayan Peninsula Puuc region during the IX and XII centuries.

Uxmal was declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1996, and it's considered one of the most important archaeological sites in the Mayan Peninsula.



LOCATION OF UXMAL

Uxmal is located in México, west of the state of Yucatán, 85km south of the city of Mérida.



HISTORY OF UXMAL

Little is known about the history of Uxmal, although the truth is that the key monuments, as well as the periods of maximum power and population, were from the late Classic period, although there are indications that it was inhabited in very long periods previous to the buildings we now know.

The occupation of the Archeological Site of Uxmal dates back to 500 BCE., but it was a political and economic power in the Mayan Peninsula Puuc region during IX and XII centuries.

The oldest references are those collected in the Chilam Balam of Chumayel (written in Mayan with Latin characters where the history of the Maya is related). With this base, and with the interpretations of the inscriptions of the rings of the Ball Court, it's estimated that Uxmal was founded in the seventh century, during the first occupation, in the classical period.

The second occupation was also registered in the Chilam Balam that took place in the 10th century by emigrants from the central lands of the Tutul Xiúes ethnic group, trace of this can also be found in the buildings. The annals in Mayan language date the arrival of the Xiues to Uxmal between the year 987 and 1007. This group introduced the Nahua component and with them the cult to Tlaloc and Quetzalcoatl; the god of rain Chaac is present since before the arrival of the Nahuas and the great dependence on rain that the inhabitants of the entire Puuc area had.

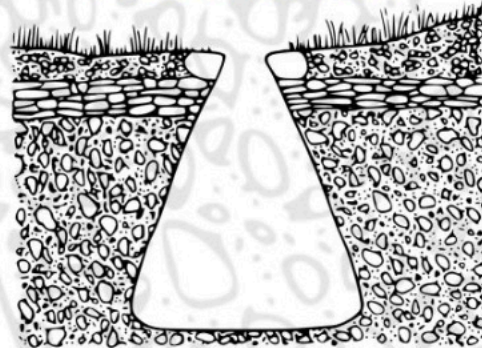
Although Puuc style architecture is predominant in the area, vestiges of other styles gathered in the same place have also been found. The Chenes style is reflected in the facades of the buildings, as well as in representations of the Toltec style feathered serpent and in traces found in other sculptures with Mexica and Olmec characteristics, showing Teotihuacan features in some of the masks that represent the god Chaac.

ESTIMATED POPULATION IN UXMAL

It's estimated that it had a population close to 25,000 inhabitants distributed in a territory of 37.5 km² with enormous agricultural potential but lacking permanent sources for water supply. This meant that the Mayans built chultúns, or water tanks to take advantage of the rainwater.

Its entrances were surrounded by canalizations that directed the rainwater towards the interior of them during the rainy seasons. Most of these archaeological sites functioned as cisterns for drinking water, although some were arranged to store corn in conditions suitable for grain.

CHALTÚN



UXMAL, A CITY OF LEGENDS

Uxmal is a city of stories and legends, of aluxes and sorcerers and of a striking beauty that forces us to observe it carefully and to recreate in the mind how it was in its best times.

The dwarf of Uxmal is one of the most famous prehispanic legends and of which there are several versions, however in all there is talk of an old sorceress who could not have children and who one day took a bird egg, wrapped it in a rag and put it in a corner of his house. Soon a child was born from the egg and, after one year, stopped growing. The old woman treated the dwarf as a grandson, and one day after a series of events, became the ruler of Uxmal.



Aluxes are the equivalent of the elf, but with the objective of stealing children, cattle and doing all kinds of mischief in the Mayan Peninsula.

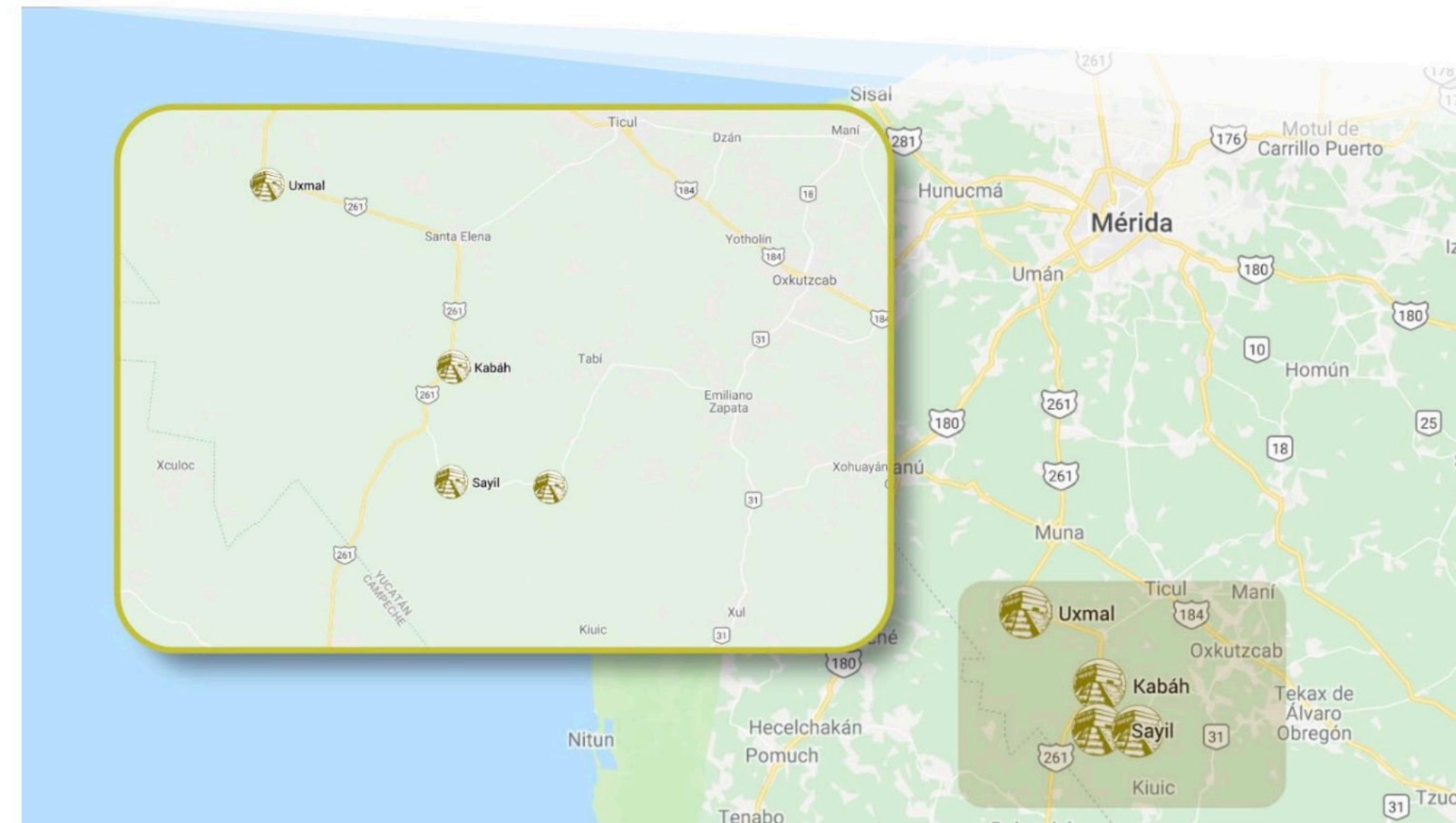
THE DECLINE OF UXMAL

Shortly after the year 900 the city began its decline and towards the 1200, all the other cities in the Puuc region, as well as Chichén Itzá were almost abandoned completely.

No one knows for certain what could be the causes of the abandonment, although the internal political struggles, ecological problems and the loss of trade with the city of Tula, in the center of Mexico, may be the reasons of the decline of Uxmal and other Mayan cities.

Later, the Xiu Dynasty came to Uxmal, which became one of the pillars of the Mayapán confederation, until the 1441 rebellion in Uxmal that would put an end to the power of Mayapán and with it, to any form of centralized authority on the Mayan Peninsula.

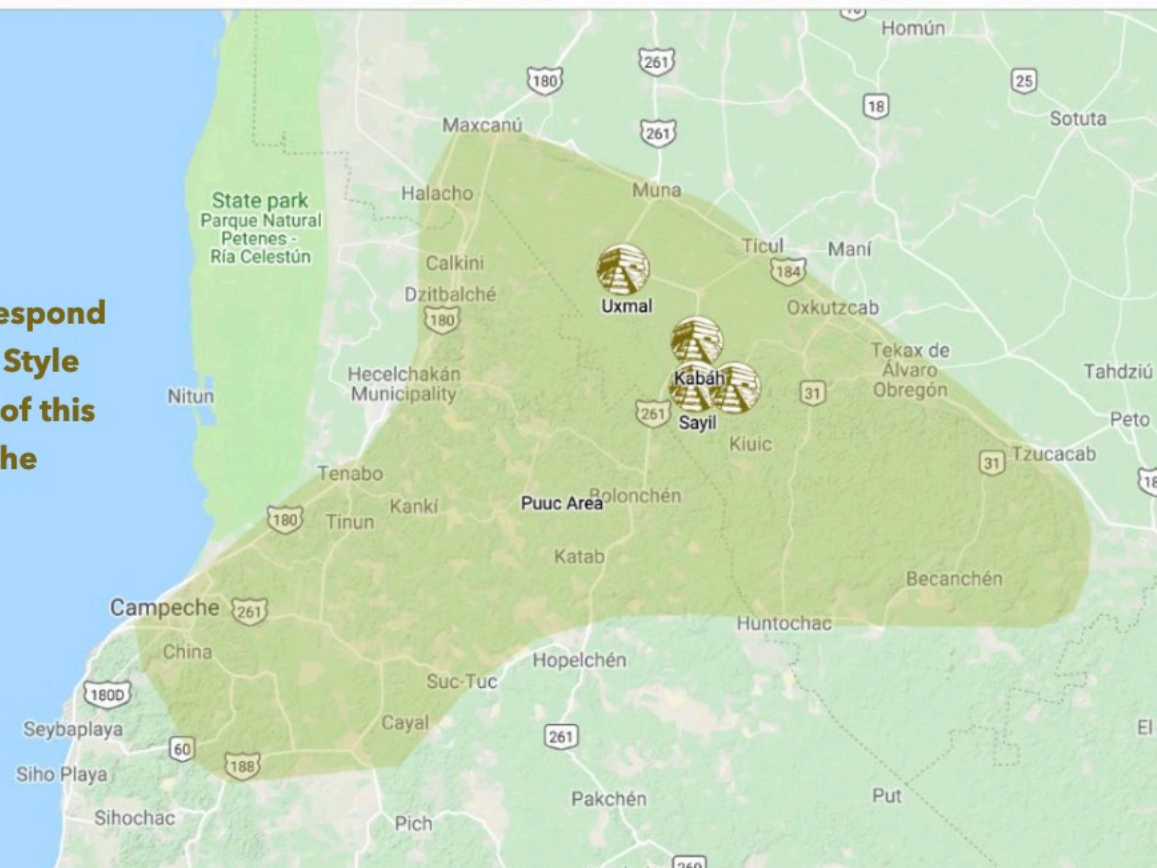
PUUC ROUTE



PUUC REGION

The Puuc region is an area of small hills without rivers, a few cenotes, and with a good portion of fertile land. This region covers an area of 4,687 miles in the south-east of Yucatan and north-west of Campeche.

These limits do not correspond to the limits of the Puuc Style since there are samples of this style in other places of the Mayan Peninsula.



PUUC ARCHITECTURE

There are pieces of evidence that early settlers were living in the Mayan Peninsula centuries before our era, but towards the Late Classical Period (550 - 850) is when the Mayans started to build their cities using the architectural style that today it is known as Puuc.

This style brings together elements from other eras, which are mixed with original features and from the environment itself.

- Smooth vertical walls at the bottom.
- Friezes that decorate the upper part, topped by flat cornices and frets.
- Columns to separate spaces and access doors, as well as stairways
- Oval and truncated triangle vaults.
- The buildings are decorated with masks, many of them representing Chaac, the Mayan god of rain, with its large and characteristic nose.
- Little columns, that evoke the reeds of the walls of the huts.
- Representations of wavy serpents
- Panels with hieroglyphs and high crests.
- In Campeche, there's more use of vertical walls topped with friezes, columns in entrances, and stair-like arches. The raw buildings are covered with well-cut stones and decorated with stone mosaics and hieroglyphics.
- In Yucatan, the vertical walls are topped with much more ornate friezes and the ornamentation becomes more abstract.

Beyond the impressive decorative elements of this architectural style, the use of a concrete base is considered an advance over the techniques that were used until then.

The use of masonry with stone veneer cover, allowed the construction to remain standing for a longer time, even though much of the construction has collapsed, some stone covers are still standing.

The presence of the huge number of masks dedicated to the rain god Chaac is explained by their dependence on rain. Mainly because the Mayans living in the Puuc route didn't have other sources of water like rivers and lakes.

An important thing to keep in mind is that the Puuc route doesn't only focus on architectural constructions, but it's also found in the art such as painting and ceramics. Even the crests and buildings were painted in bright colors.

IMPORTANT MAYAN CITIES OF THE PUUC ROUTE

Although there are some relevant cities, such as Chichén Itzá or Edzná, which also have elements of the Puuc architectural style, there is a group of cities that are relatively close to each other and make up a circuit known as the Puuc route.

These are the main 4 cities:

UXMAL
KABÁH
SAYIL
LABNÁ

UXMAL

The archaeological site of Uxmal is made up of 15 groups of buildings, many in the form of courtyards on a north-south axis. The most important buildings are the Pyramid of the Magician with its Quadrangle of the Birds, the Nunnery Quadrangle, the Governor's Palace, and the Great Pyramid.

Although the Puuc style architecture is predominant in the area, you can also find other influences like the Chenes style, which is reflected in the facades of some buildings.



KABÁH

Kabáh has an important and remarkable Mayan City because of its architecture and history, which goes back to least to the Early Classic (250 - 550).

One of the features that stands out is the merge of architectural styles because despite being located in the Puuc route, elements of the Petén and Chenes style can be appreciated.



SAYIL

Sayil is one of the great cities of the Puuc region, it was densely populated, reaching about 17,000 inhabitants, some would say only behind Uxmal in importance.

It's been studied in a broad way, so we now know that it was a city that reached an extension of nearly four square kilometers.

Sayil was organized around a large Sacbé, which runs from north to south and led from the Palace Group to another set of buildings one kilometer away.



LABNÁ

Labná is famous for having a beautiful Mayan construction of remarkable perfection and fine ornamentation carved in stone called The Arch. It must have been the entrance to an enclosure dedicated to great celebrations. On its facade, it includes representations of palm houses and stylized snakes.

Like other settlements in the region, Labná has an internal Sacbé that follows a north-south axis and communicates its main groups.



MAYAN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
PRIVATE
TOURS

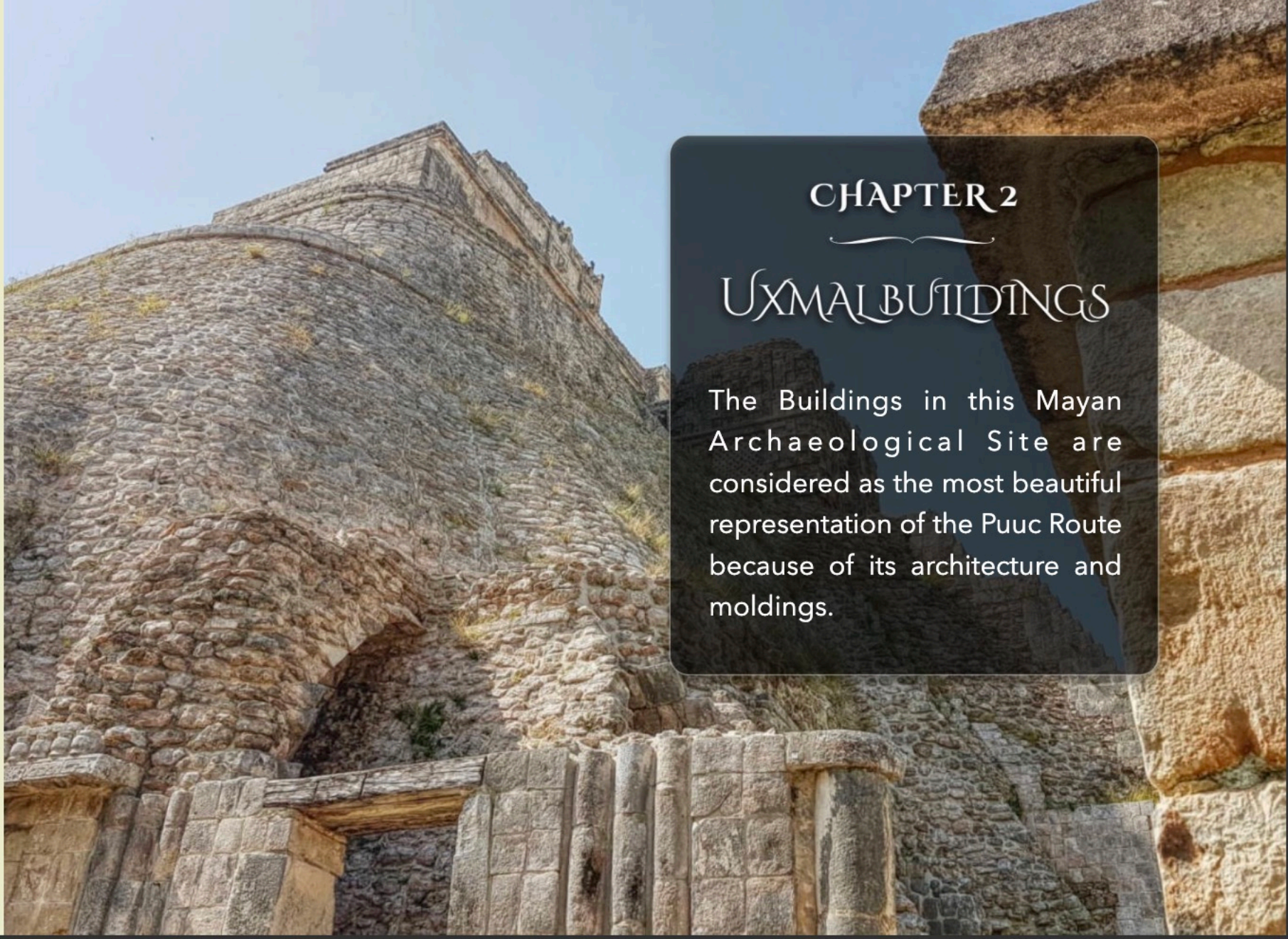
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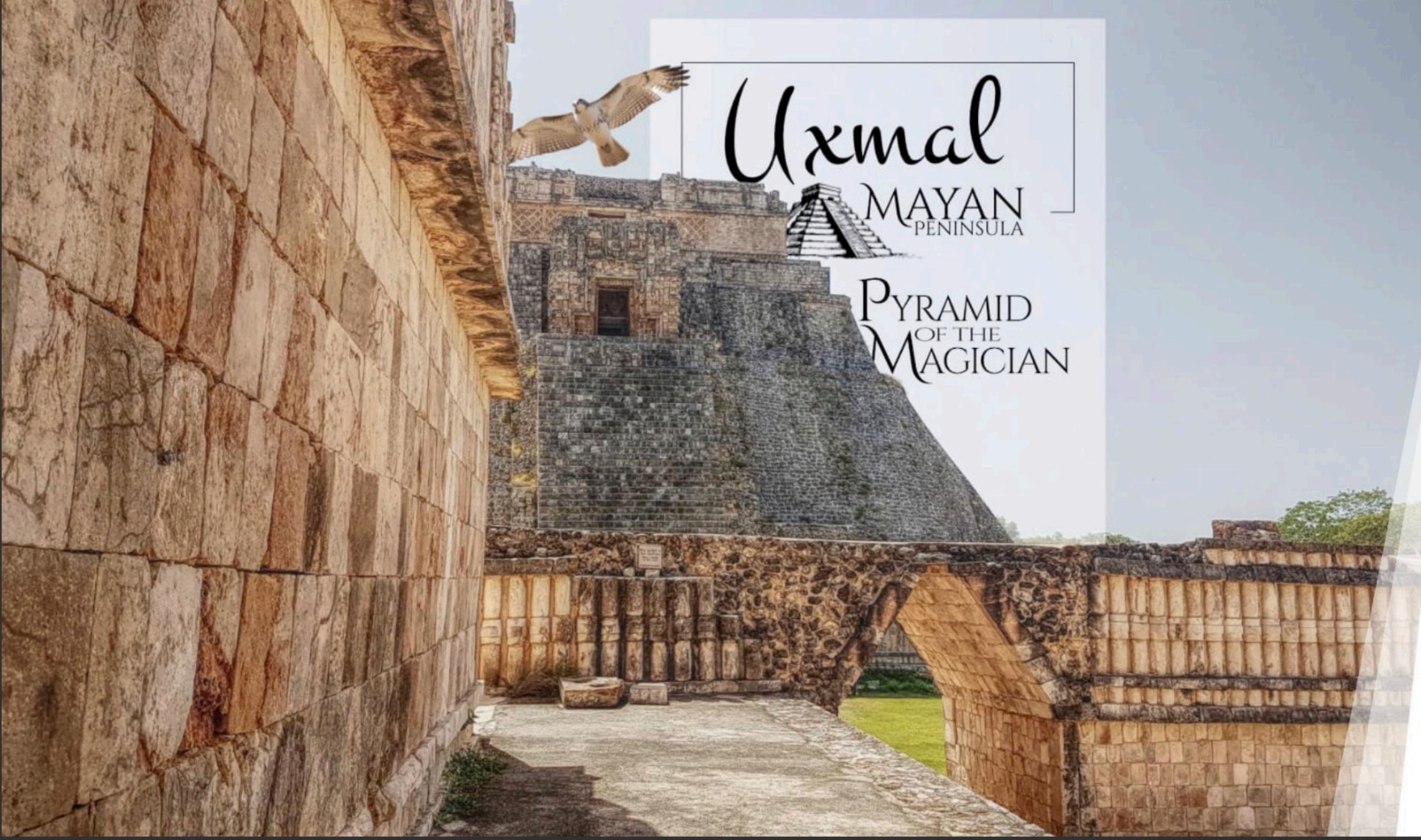




CHAPTER 2

UXMAL BUILDINGS

The Buildings in this Mayan Archaeological Site are considered as the most beautiful representation of the Puuc Route because of its architecture and moldings.



Uxmal

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PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN

Legend has it that the Pyramid of the Magician in Uxmal (Pirámide del Adivino) was built in a single night. Very unlikely because it consists of 5 structures from different eras, perhaps only the last and smallest structure on top was built in one night and that turned later on turned into the legend.

Pyramid of the Magician in Uxmal viewed from the Nunnery entrance

We can say that the general form of the Pyramid of the Magician evokes the configuration of the roof of the Mayan house elaborated with palm. This form is considered with the maximum expression of the cosmos and divinities.

This Pyramid is also called the Pyramid of the Sorcerer or Pyramid of the Dwarf, all of them from the legend that they told an American researcher when he visited Uxmal. The legend tells the story of a dwarf who was the son of a sorceress and who had been born from an egg. This character, with the intention of becoming governor of the city, bet with the governor of the time that he was able to build a pyramid in a single night. The pyramid was built, and the dwarf proclaimed himself governor of the three-times built city of Uxmal.

This is the largest monument in Uxmal that consists of five differentiated structures from different periods. The first and older ones are buried by the newer ones and became accessible until archeologists created their own entrances.

THE 4 SUBSTRUCTURES OF THE PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN

The Pyramid of the Magician in Uxmal began to be built in the sixth century and the last level dates from the tenth century.

The existing hieroglyphs have helped the dating of each of the construction periods.

PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN'S FIRST TEMPLE

1

It's located on the bottom platform, practically at ground level. Its decoration is based on columns and Chac masks, with two of them standing above the entrance stand out. In this temple, the sculpture called the Queen of Uxmal was found, which is a serpent head with an open mouth, from which a human being emerges.

PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN'S SECOND TEMPLE

2

To build this temple, which is approximately 2/3 of the current height, the first Temple had to be covered and a pyramid built on it. To access it, an opening was made from where the columns that support the roof can be seen.

PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN'S THIRD TEMPLE

3

It's an oratory that was later covered, by another building with a throne in the form of a Chac figurehead.

PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN'S FOURTH TEMPLE

4

It's the best preserved of all the five temples of the Pyramid of the Magician in Uxmal. It has a chamber on the eastern part of the pyramid in the form of a mask of Chac with its mouth as the entrance. It has a very ornate decoration, outside of the usual Puuc style.

PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN'S FIFTH TEMPLE

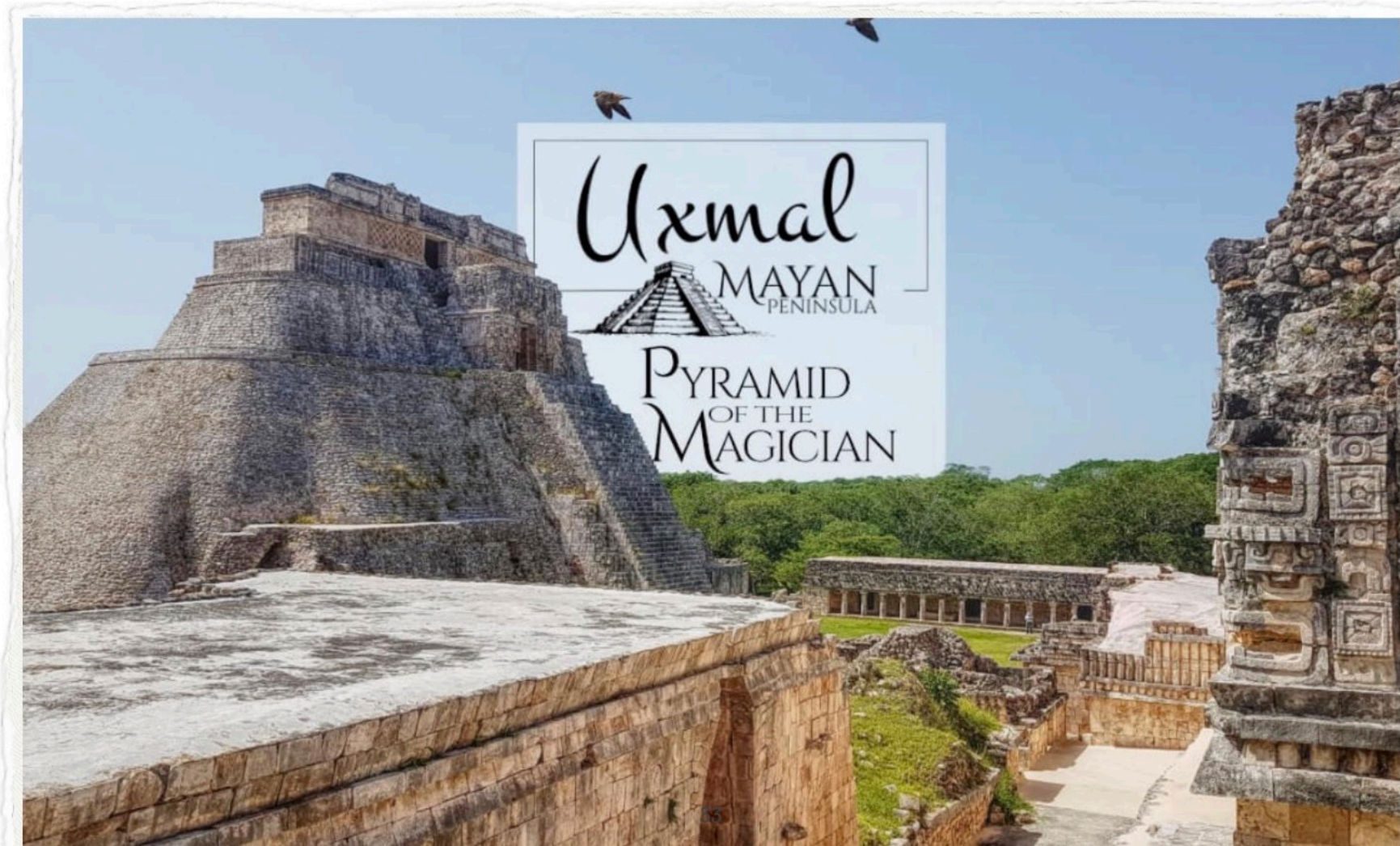
5

It's at the top of the pyramid and to access it you have to climb 150 steep steps that are flanked by Chac masks. The decoration of the facades is completely Puuc, smooth low walls, on which a largely decorated frieze is placed, in this case with intertwined snakes and a roof hut.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN

The pyramid of the Magician in Uxmal was made in such a way that the western staircase faces the sun on the summer solstice sunset. It measures around 35 meters in height and has an elliptical plan of 53.5 meters. To date, five construction phases have been detected at different times and with different architectural styles. Among them stands out the west facade that presents a Chenes style.

The building that crowns the upper basement constitutes the last constructive stage that was carried out in the Puuc style. It is a construction with double facades: one that faces west with a central entrance and another that faces east with two entrances. On the east façade, you can still see one of the typical designs of the Puuc style that corresponds to a hut with a palm roof, while in the west facade you can still see panels with geometric designs in the form of staggered rhombuses that represent the earth.



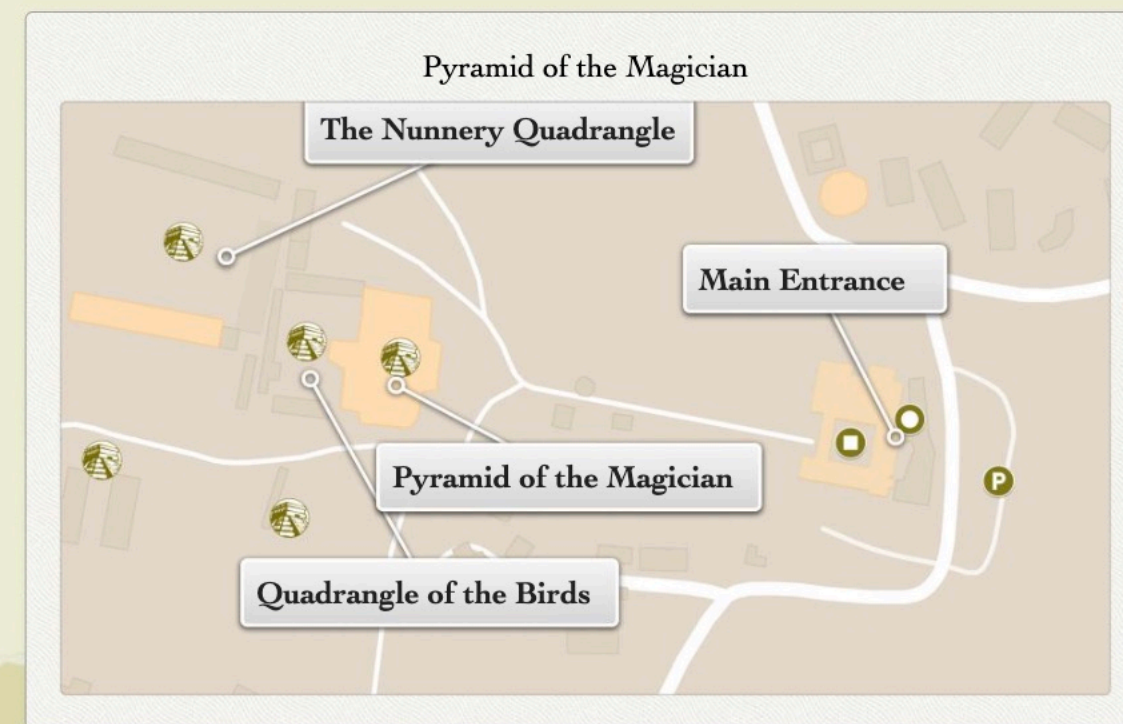
360° VIEW OF THE PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN



[Open 360°](#)

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LOCATION OF THE PYRAMID OF THE MAGICIAN IN UXMAL



The Pyramid of the Magician in Uxmal is the first building you see when you access the archeological site. It's right next to the Birds Quadrangle.



Uxmal

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THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE

The Nunnery Quadrangle in Uxmal was built from 900-1000, and the name related with nuns was assigned in the 16th century because it resembled a convent. The quadrangle consists of four palaces placed on different levels that surround a courtyard. Of the different buildings that make up this palatial complex, several vault tops have been recovered, they are painted and represent partial calendrical dates from 906 to 907 AD, which is consistent with the Chan Chahk'ahk Nalajaw period of government. The formal entrance, the hierarchy of the structures through the different elevations, and the absence of domestic elements suggest that this space corresponds to a royal palace with administrative and non-residential functions, where the ruling group must have had meetings to collect the tribute, make decisions, dictate sentences, among other activities.

THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE

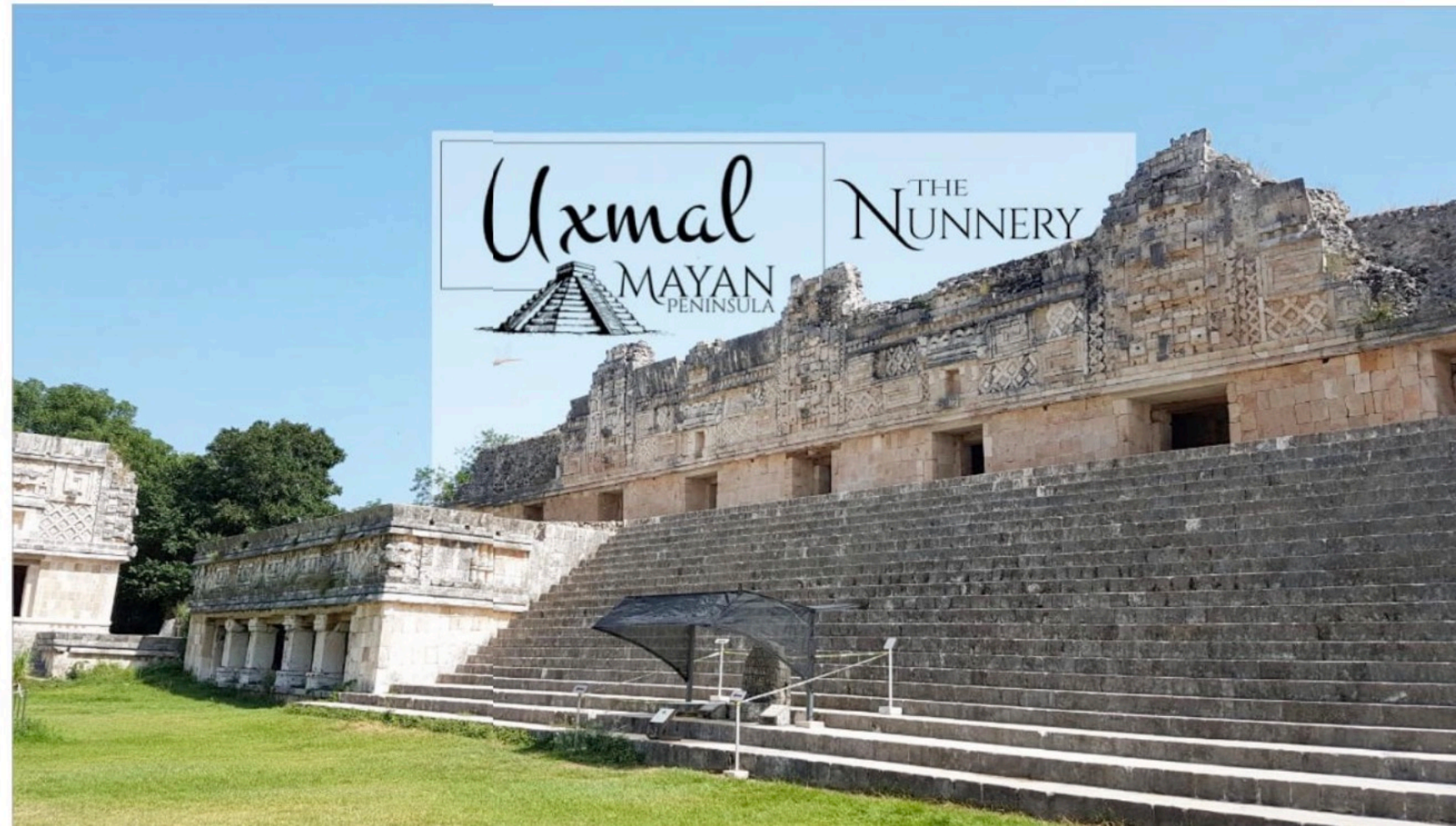
NORTH BUILDING

The building located to the north seems to be the most important since it is on a higher platform compared to the others, although those located to the east and the west are no less important.

There's an access to it by a large staircase with a carved stone in the center, you can also access this building through modern metal stairs on the northeast corner.

There are two temples on both sides of the bottom end of this staircase. The one on the right, the smallest one, has no ornamentation and only has two columns. The one on the left is supported in four columns and may have been dedicated to the planet Venus.

In this building, there are a total of 26 rooms that are arranged horizontally. The ornamentation is made of human figures, monkeys, birds and stylized Mayan huts with roofs of feathers, two-headed snakes, and of course, masks of Chac and Tlaloc.



THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE SOUTH BUILDING

The main access to the quadrangle is through a large arch located in this eight-roomed building. This arch has red hands painted that are believed to symbolize the god Zamna called the celestial hand. These paintings were uncovered when the polychrome stuccos that covered these rooms were detached.

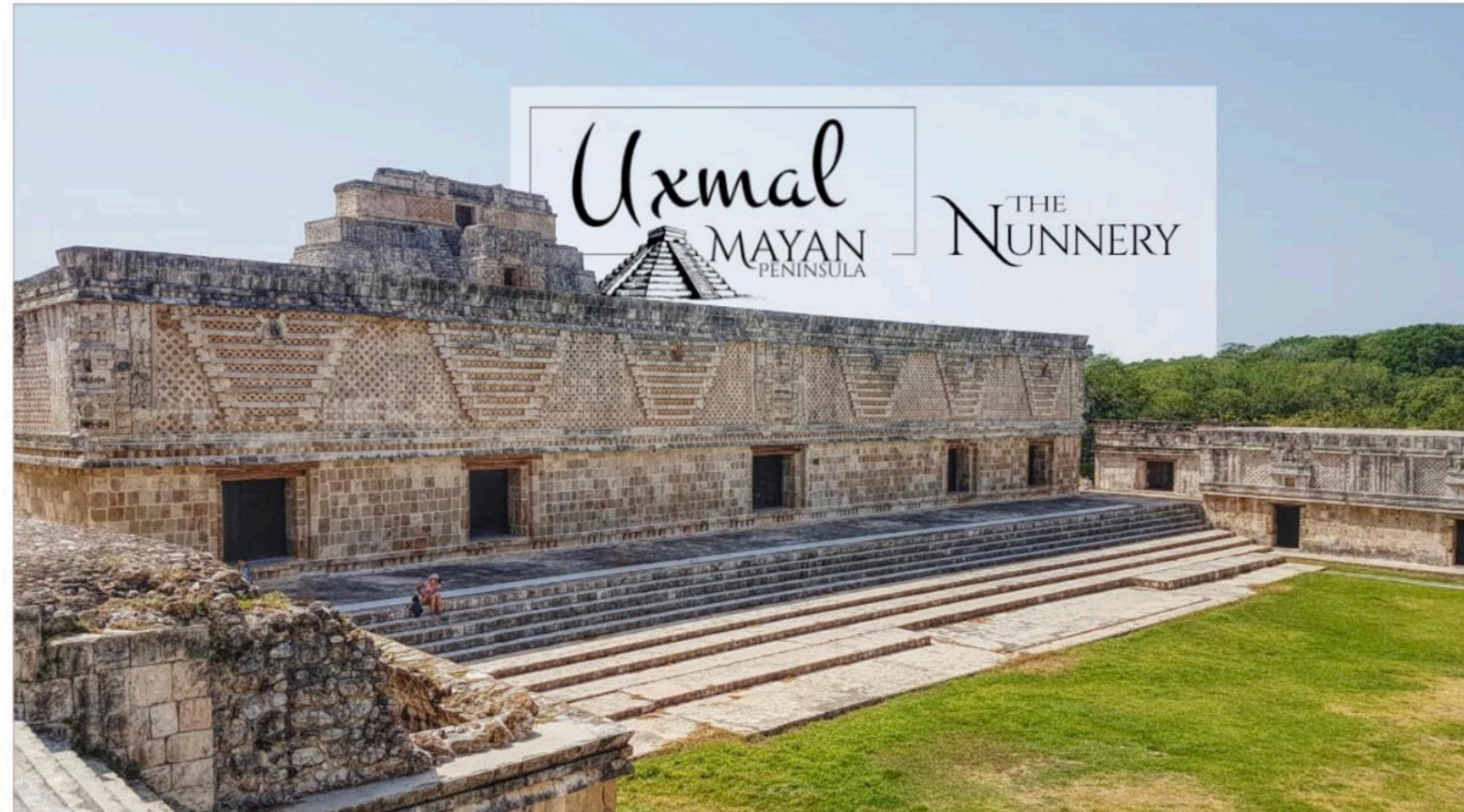
The decoration of the facade is composed of alternating smooth panels with groups of three columns that is completed with representations of Chac where the nose has been changed by ripples in the eyes, representing rain when falling.



THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE

WEST BUILDING

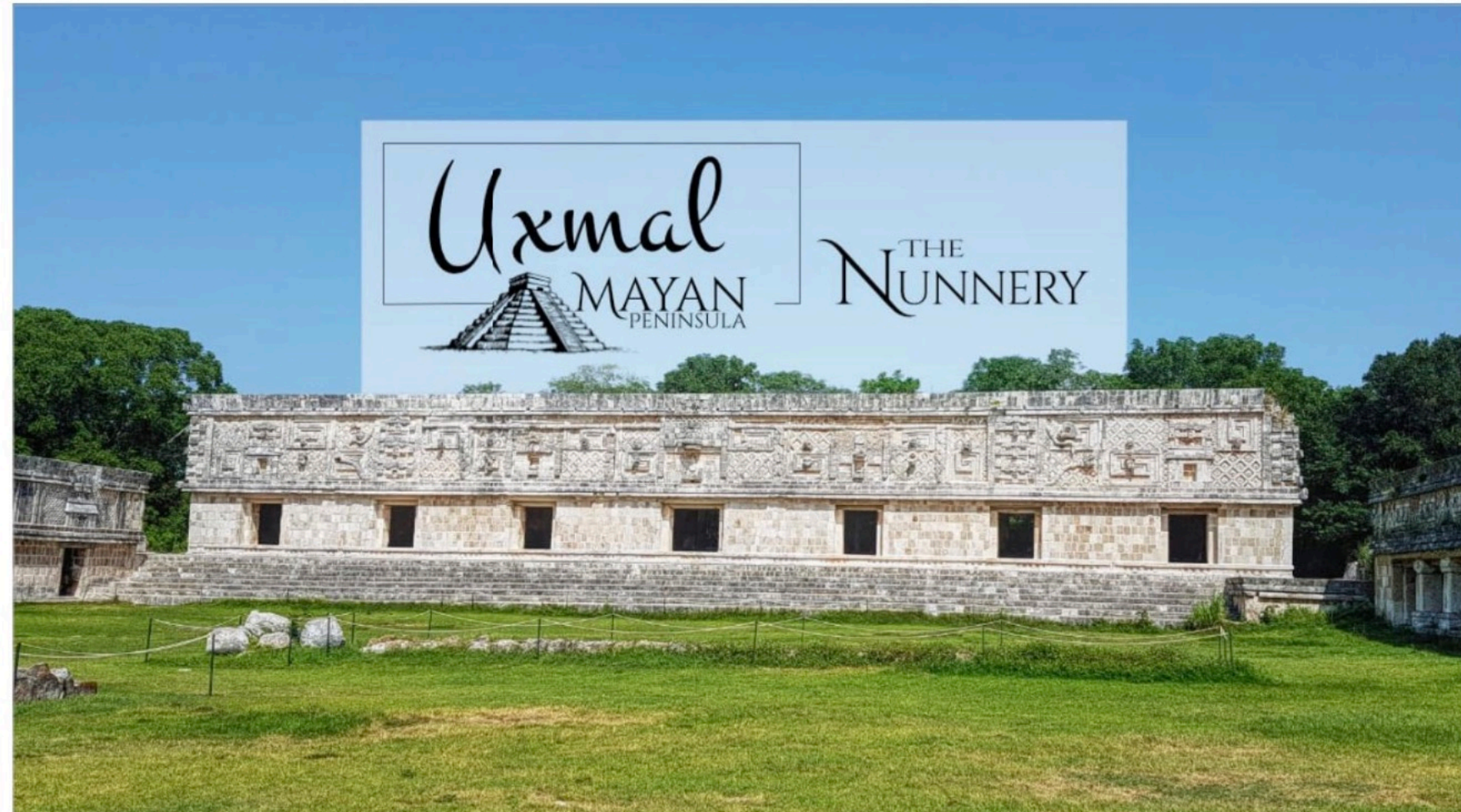
The facade of the west building has a length of 50 m with six chambers and interior rooms. It's decorated by mosaics with feathered serpent motifs and geometric symbols, warriors and Chac masks. The building has trapezoidal arrangements of two-headed snakes and shields with then representation of owls. There are also decorative elements that simulate houses with palm roofs and waterfalls of masks with prolonged noses.



THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE

EAST BUILDING

The eastern building has a length of 50m with five chambers, two of which have other interior rooms. The decoration of its walls mimics snake scales complemented by six groups of double-headed snakes arranged from the largest on the top, to smallest on the bottom and with owl heads, a bird associated with death. Chaac's masks are also present on both edges.



PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE

The Quadrangle rests on a rectangular platform more than four meters high and 100 meters per side with four different buildings that are not attached on the corners.

The facades present a rich combination of decorative motifs such as lattice, columns, huts, the masks of the rain god, two-headed serpents, owls, symbols of the planet Venus, geometric elements, and naked and tied human figures, either standing or sitting.

This architectural complex is made up of four structures on different platforms arranged around a large patio. Each facade presents a combination of designs related to different deities evoking cosmogonic concepts and a strong cult of fertility.



360° VIEW OF THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE

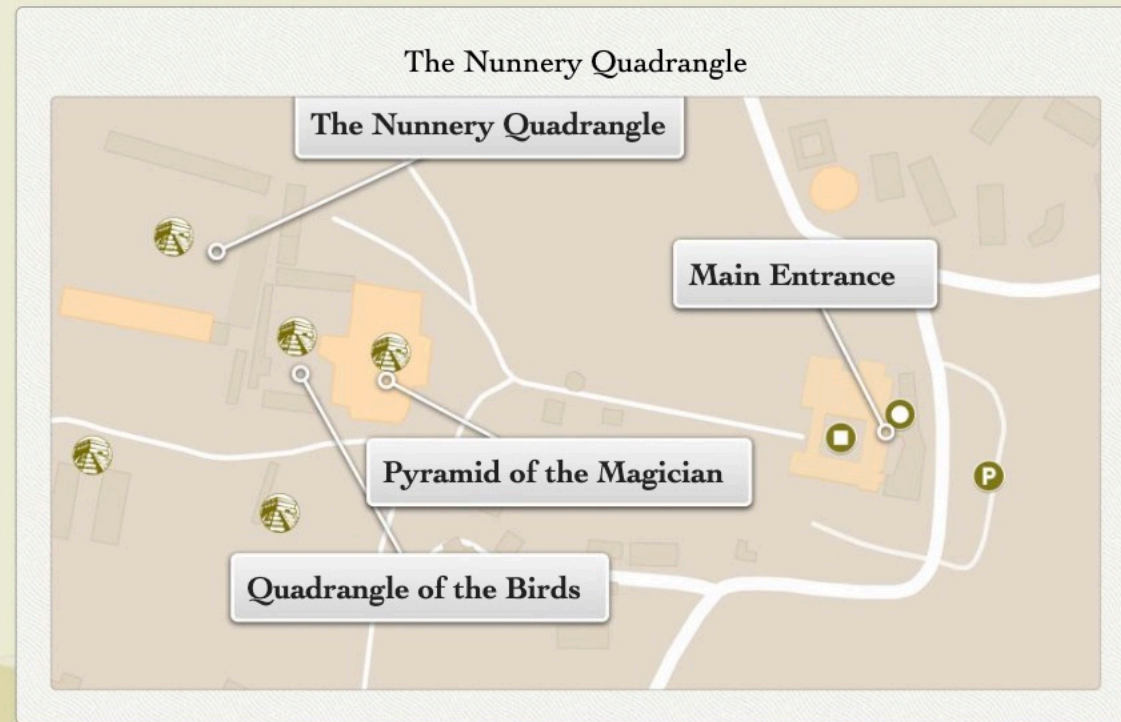


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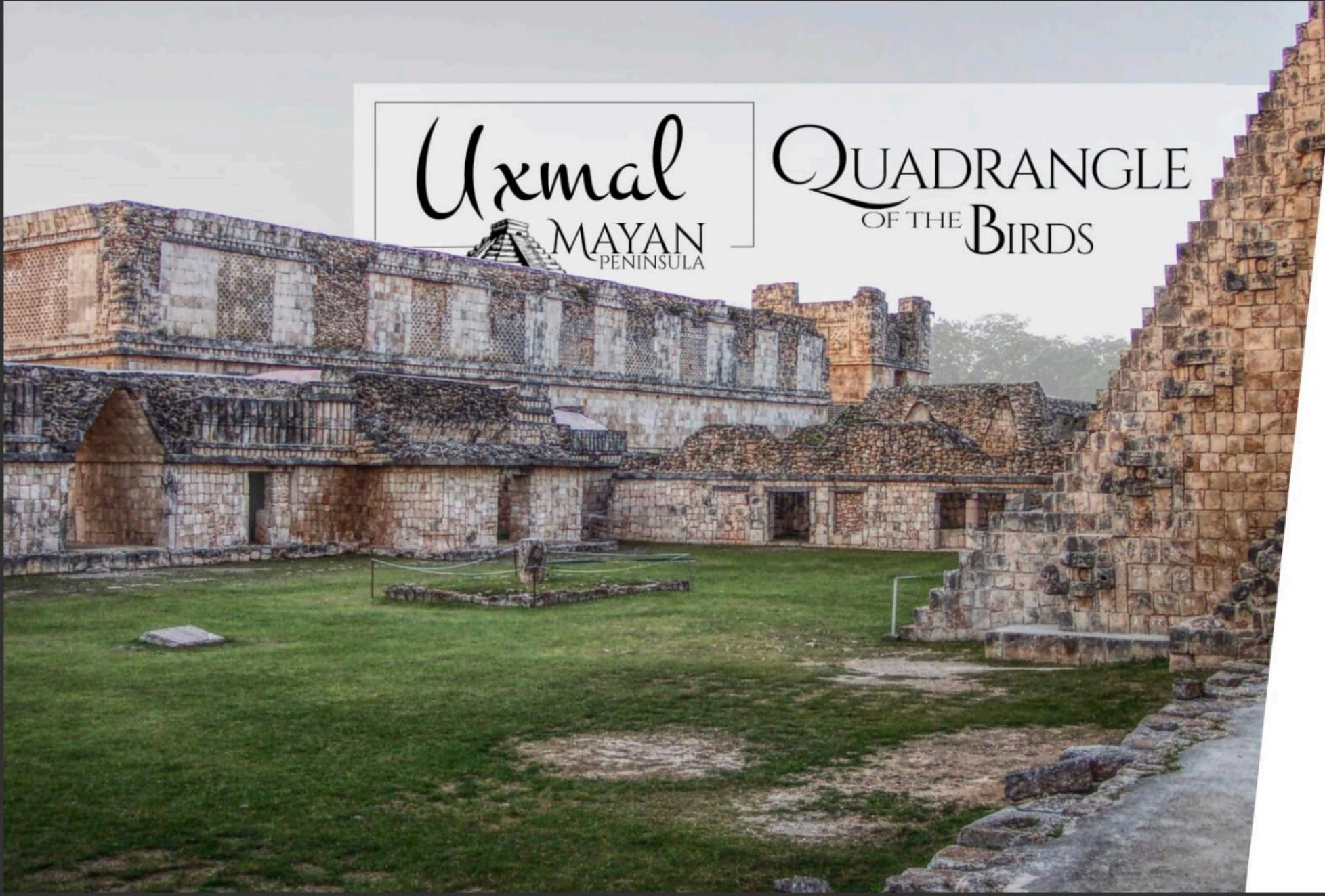
LOCATION OF THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE IN UXMAL



The Nunnery Quadrangle in Uxmal is behind the Pyramid of the Magician when you first enter the Archeological Site.

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QUADRANGLE OF THE BIRDS



The Quadrangle of the Birds is a courtyard bounded by four structures that frame the Pyramid of the Magician, this set of structures was built in various stages throughout the life of Uxmal. The name Quadrangle of the Birds was given because of the figures of macaws decorating the west building.



EAST BUILDING

This building is Puuc style with its smooth low walls only interrupted by false columns attached to the facade. In the upper part the friezes were profusely decorated with a diagonal latticework of carved stone, and masks of the god Chaac.

Much of this upper wall is no longer appreciated today, due to the marked deterioration in which it is located. The building originally had five chambers with their respective accesses, the chambers at the ends had an additional access each. Due to later stages of construction, the accesses were mostly closed.



NORTH AND SOUTH BUILDINGS

In a subsequent constructive stage, the north and south buildings were erected simultaneously, with an open access to the west. These two buildings lack ornaments in their walls and are smaller in dimensions and height than their predecessor the eastern building.

Both buildings are composed of three paired chambers, giving a total of six chambers for each building. In their respective central accesses, there is a colonnade, which in the case of the south building covers the entire façade.

WEST BUILDING

The west building ended up closing the square giving rise to the quadrangle of birds. The Quadrangle of the Birds western building was decorated in Puuc style, which is characterized by having an access framed by a false Mayan Arch and in its frieze, walls adorned by colonnades attached to the facade lacking structural function.



THE QUADRANGLE OF THE BIRDS

CHAMBERS

The last constructive stage includes the creation of the chambers attached to the west building, which gave the name to this entire complex because they have friezes adorned with images of birds perched on a frieze.



Carved stone that simulates the shapes of a palm roof gives the impression of a Mayan shack. At its bases, we can see a series of half-moons, while the corners show the jaws of a stylized snake.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE QUADRANGLE OF THE BIRDS

There are 4 structures that create a patio west of the Pyramid of the Magician. The north structure has two small entrances on the left and right, and in the middle, there's a bigger entrance to a chamber with three columns. The west structure has an arch similar to the one found in the Nunnery Quadrangle that leads to this same building. To the south, there's a building with more than 10 columns. Last and most impressive is the Pyramid of the Magician on the east side of this patio.

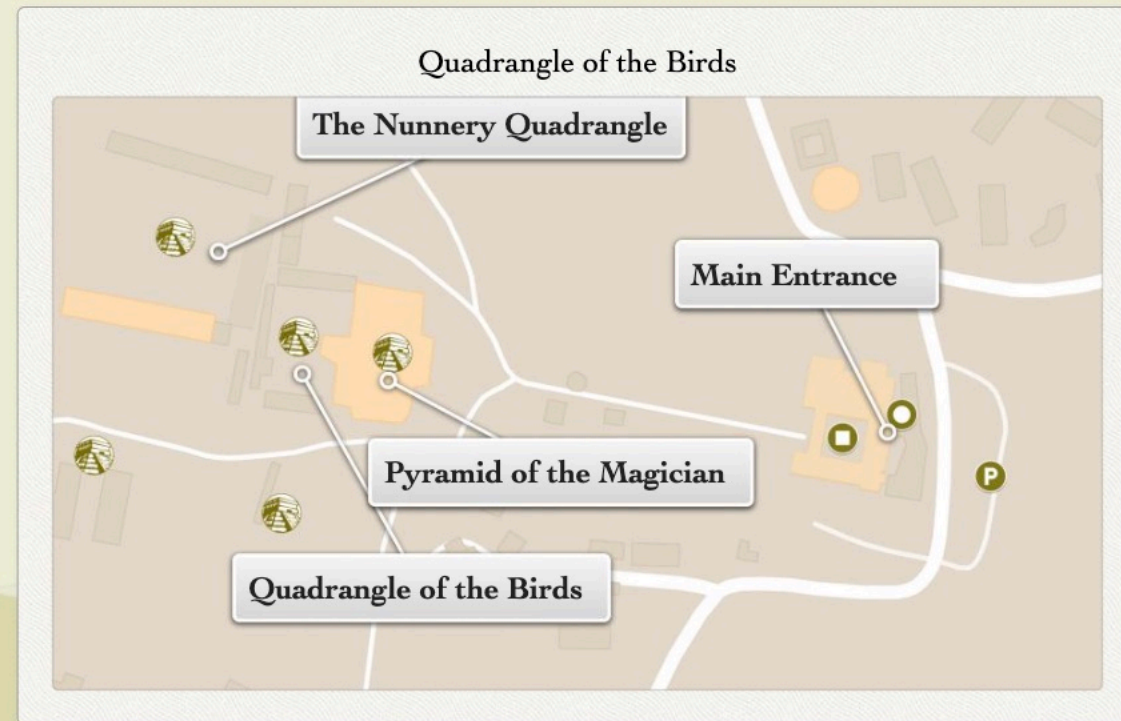
The entrance to this patio is through the arch in the west building and also between the west and south buildings.

LOCATION OF THE TEMPLE OF THE QUADRANGLE OF THE BIRDS



The Quadrangle of the Birds in Uxmal is right behind the Pyramid of the Magician. It's a nearly closed rectangle between the Pyramid and the Nunnery Quadrangle.

LOCATION OF THE TEMPLE OF THE QUADRANGLE OF THE BIRDS



The Quadrangle of the Birds in Uxmal is right behind the Pyramid of the Magician. It's a nearly closed rectangle between the Pyramid and the Nunnery Quadrangle.



Uxmal

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BALL COURT

Unlike other Mayan cities, the Ball Court in Uxmal is not monumental nor is it surrounded by temples that highlight its symbolic importance. The Ball Courts are not abundant in the Puuczone cities, this is the only one found in Uxmal.

This game has always been related to mythical and cosmic aspects. The ball symbolized the movements of the stars in the sky and the players, in repeated occasions, symbolically staged the fight of the day against the night or the struggle of the deities of the underworld against the gods of heaven.

The date of construction was found in one of the calendrical symbols revealing the date in the year 906, time in which Uxmal began the decline.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BALL COURT

Its condition is very deteriorated, and it's made of two constructions of medium dimensions that make up the sides of the court with the rings by which the ball was to be introduced. The originally carved stone rings were removed to protect them from the elements and were replaced by reproductions.



360° VIEW OF THE BALL COURT

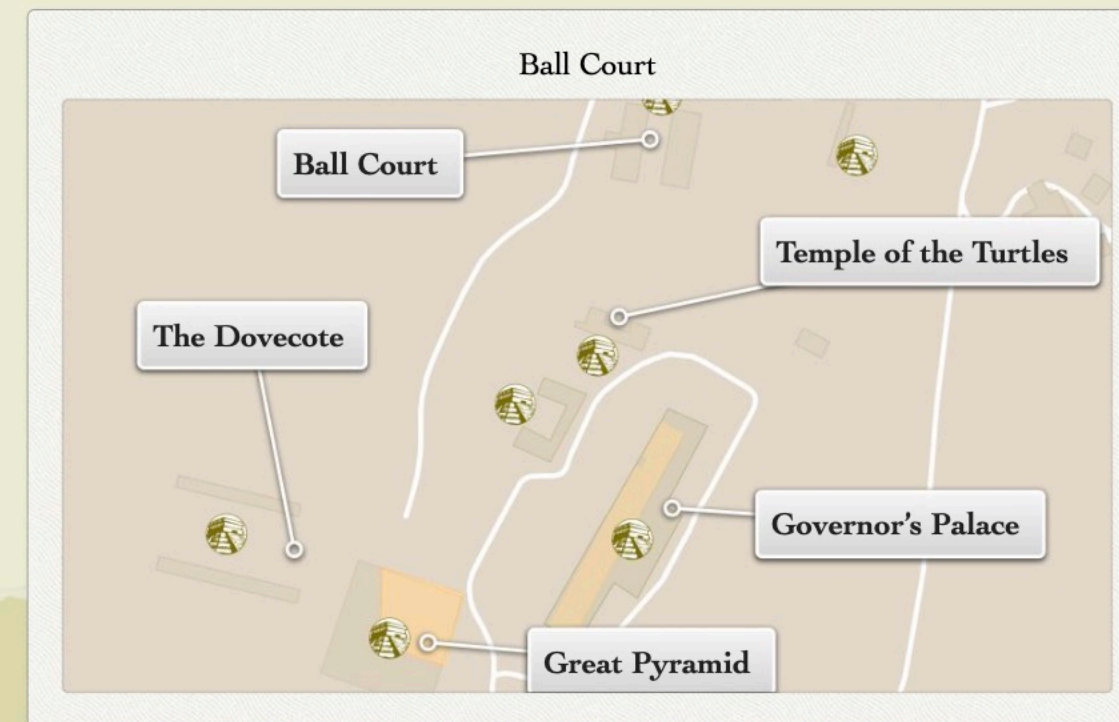


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LOCATION OF THE TEMPLE OF THE BALL COURT IN UXMAL



The Ball Court in Uxmal is a few meters away from the Quadrangle of the Nuns through the great arch of the temple of the south.

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GOVERNOR'S
PALACE

The Governor's Palace in Uxmal is one of the most beautiful examples of Mayan sculpture and architecture, and one of the must-see buildings in the city together with the Pyramid of the Magician and the Nunnery Quadrangle.

It's placed on top of a hill, characteristic of the Puuc region on a large platform that makes up three terraces. It was divided into 3 parts separated by very high transverse vaults.

The decoration of the facade of the building has glyphs of Venus, placed on the cheeks of the masks of Chac, god of rain and fertility, there are also eight two-headed snakes above the main entrance. Along the facade, there are thatched huts, garlands, columns, thrones, feather headdresses, numerals with bars and dots appearing in two Chac masks in the north corners of the palace.

In the center stands the throne of a sovereign sitting majestically, surrounded by entwined snakes and masks of the god Chac.

PLATFORM OF THE JAGUARS

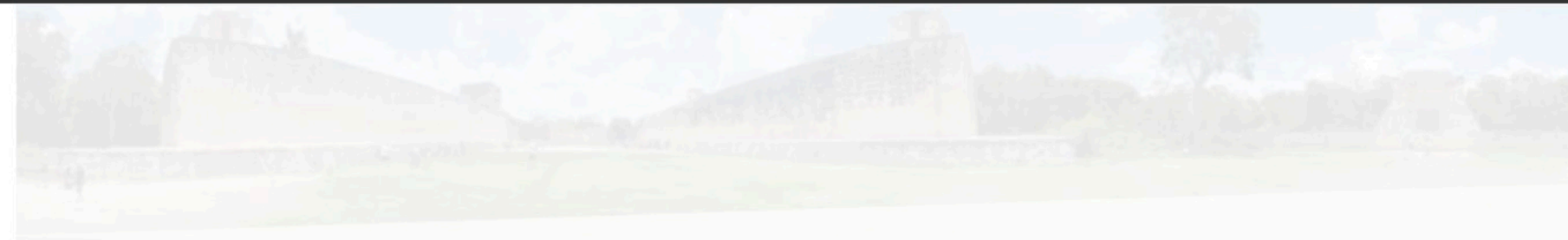
It's thought that the Platform of the Jaguars could have been a ceremonial altar located on the terrace in front of the Governor's Palace. On this platform, there's a sculpture that represents two jaguars united by the thorax oriented from north to south and could be accessed by four stairs on each side. An interesting fact is that there's a Sacbé that goes to Kabáh starting from the base of this platform.



PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE

It measures almost 100m long, 12m wide, 9m high, and consists of three independent bodies, the central one is a rectangular building that has fourteen accessible chambers, 11 of them, from the outside.

Governor's Palace has separate buildings on both sides that are linked to the central building through the tall transverse vaults. The walls are smooth, and without ornamentation from the floor level to the height of the accesses; above them, there is a large ornamented fretwork.



360° VIEW OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE

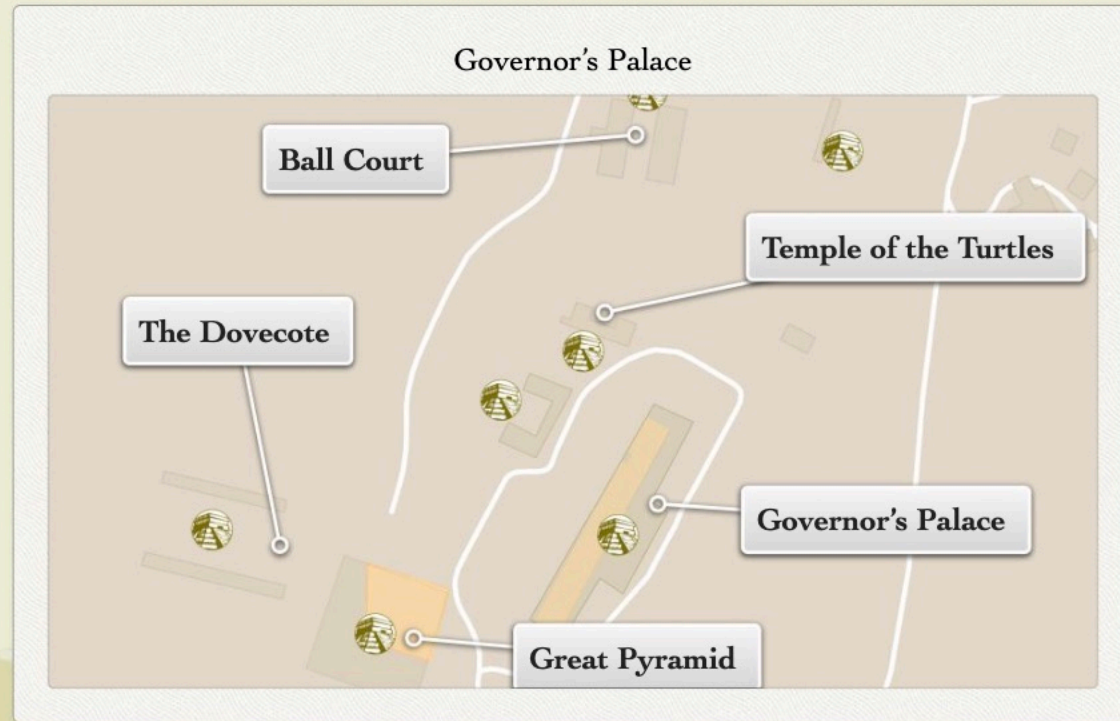


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LOCATION OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE IN UXMAL



Governor's Palace in Uxmal is up on a small hill next to the Great Pyramid. This is the recommended place to see on your tour through Uxmal after you've seen the Ball Court.

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TEMPLE OF THE TURTLES



The Temple of the Turtles in Uxmal is one of the simplest decorated temples in the city, named because of the carefully carved turtle statues that adorn its cornice on the four sides of the frieze of the building.

This Temple was built in the late phase of the flourishing Puuc style or late Uxmal period between the years 800 and 900 and it is thought that it was part of the first substructure of the Governor's Palace.

The decoration is sober and its smooth interior walls contrast with the columns that are in the upper facade, where along the cornice there are sculptures of turtles, which acquire great importance due to their association with the rain and with the earth. Surely the Temple of the



PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPLE OF THE TURTLES

The Temple of the Turtles in Uxmal measures 30 meters from east to west and 11 from south to north, with an approximate height of seven meters. It contains three central chambers crossed by corridors with accesses on the north and south fronts; some of the rooms have low stools that served to sit. In addition, it has two side chambers facing east and west.

The upper part of the façade is decorated with elongated thin columns, moldings and the cornice with turtle sculptures, typical arrangements of the late phase of the Puuc style.



360° VIEW OF THE TEMPLE OF THE TURTLES

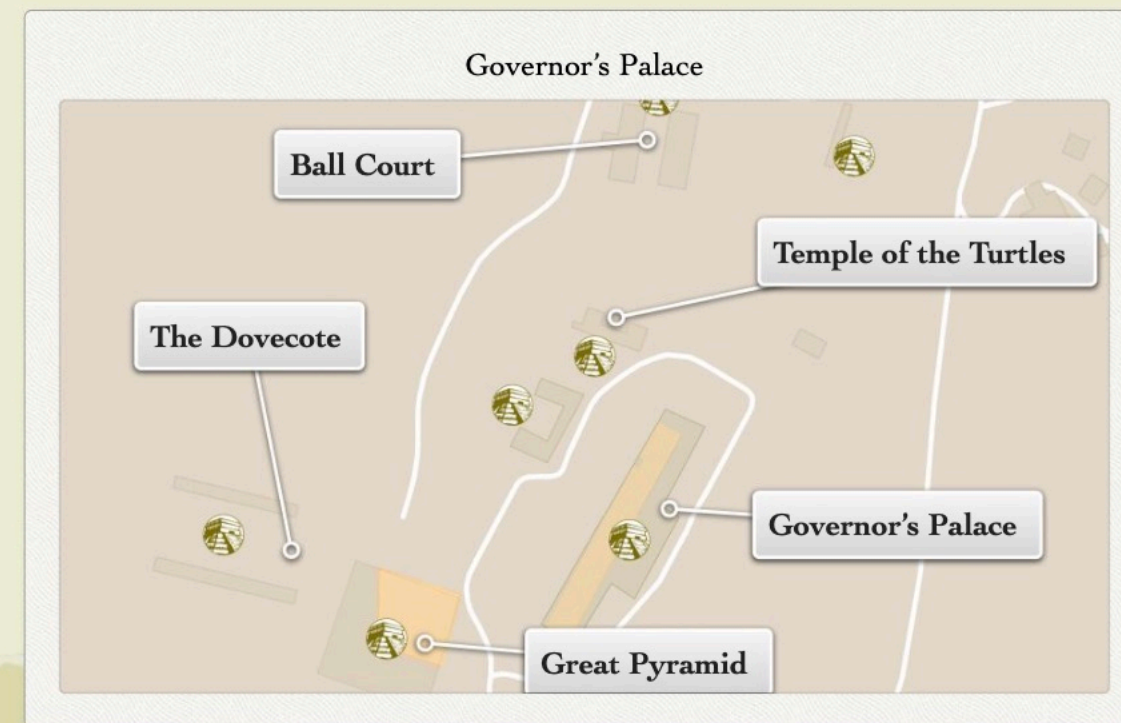


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LOCATION OF THE TEMPLE OF THE TURTLES IN UXMAL



You'll find the Temple of the Turtles in Uxmal on the north-east side of the Governor's Palace's main platform where you have an amazing view of the Ball Court and the Pyramid of the Magician.



GREAT PYRAMID



The Great Pyramid in Uxmal is one of the few large Mayan buildings that you can still climb. It has nine stepped bodies and a stairway facing north that must have been a pyramid of similar magnitude to that of the Pyramid of the Magician.

There are four last steps to reach the top of the Temple of Great Pyramid in Uxmal named Temple of the Guacamayas, where there's an entryway with a large mask of Chac. This Temple was built on the VIII century and it was decorated by a cornice, frets and a decoration of birds, specifically macaws, which gives the temple its name.

The Temple's corners have three masks of Chac, one over another, the figureheads have a rounder sculpting than others from Uxmal.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID

This monument measures around 80 m on its north side and approximately 30 m in height. Its general form is that of a truncated quadrangular pyramid formed by nine stepped bodies.



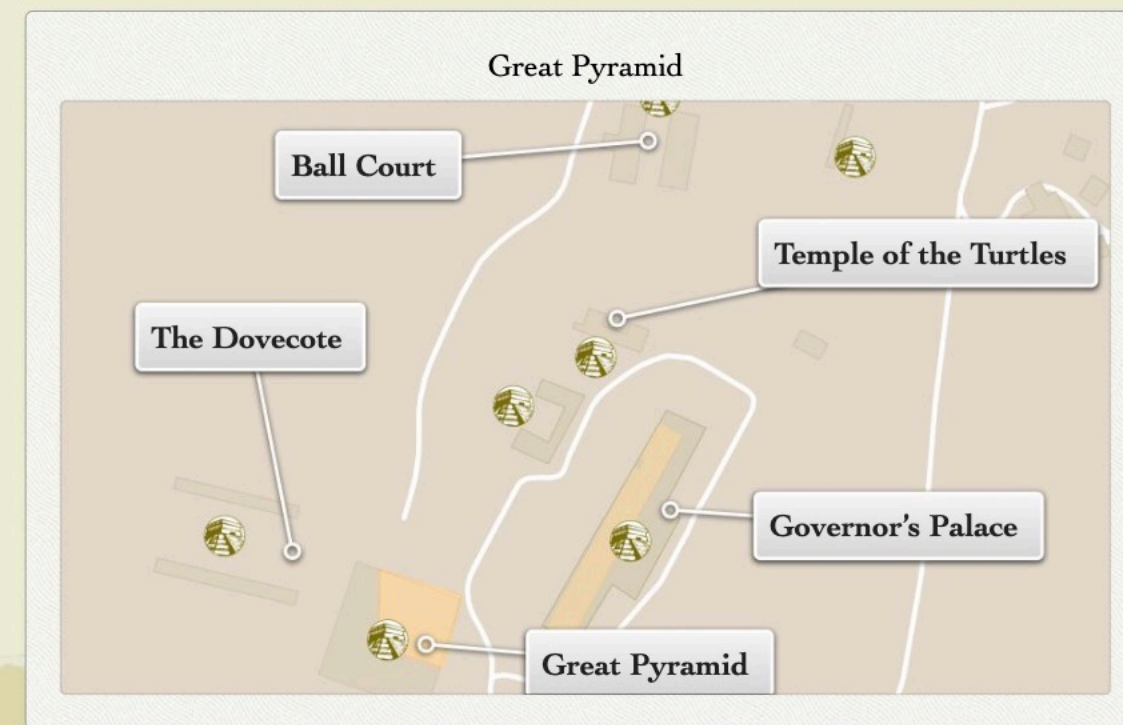
360° VIEW OF THE GREAT PYRAMID



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LOCATION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID IN UXMAL



On the southwest side of the lower platform of the Governor's Palace stands the remains of the Great Pyramid in Uxmal, and next to it you can see the Dovecote.



Uxmal
MAYAN
PENINSULA
THE
DOVECOTE

The Dovecote in Uxmal is a building located next to the Great Pyramid towards the west that closes one side of a rectangular patio of 140m². Despite being half-destroyed, its peculiar formation is striking, this structure has a very remarkable tall crest resembling a Dovecote, hence its name.

The remains that are still preserved allow us to suppose that the figures were supported by pedestals.

THE DOVECOTE GROUP

The Dovecote Group is located southwest of the Cemetery and Quadrangles of both the Nunnery and Birds. This is another of the sets, or groups that are part of the buildings assembled in Uxmal in the same geometric arrangement.

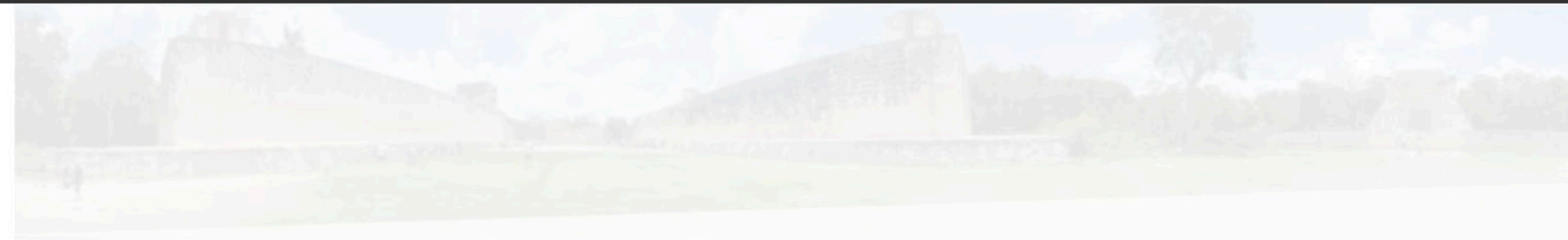
The construction must have been part of a residential complex that had a roof at the western end of the complex and a pyramid with a sanctuary at the top.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DOVECOTE

The crests are made up of nine staggered triangular units that rest on a row of around 40 niche-like pillars. There are characters carved in the surface of the crest.

This cresting is known to be of a specific peninsular type from the early Puuc architecture, dated between years 670 and 770.

In one of the corners, there is a small pyramid crowned with a temple.



360° VIEW OF THE DOVECOTE

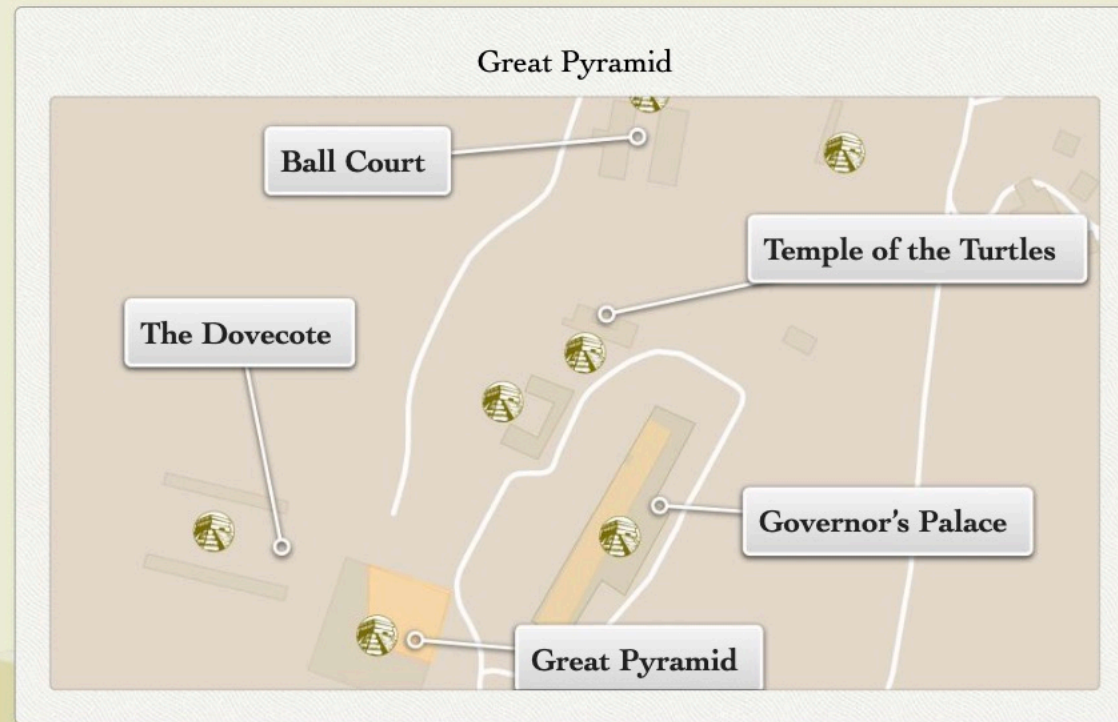


[Open 360°](#)



360° Photo opens in your browser and requires internet connection.

LOCATION OF THE DOVECOTE IN UXMAL



The Dovecote in Uxmal is located right next to the Great Pyramid.

Uxmal
MAYAN
PENINSULA
HOUSE OF THE
IGUANA

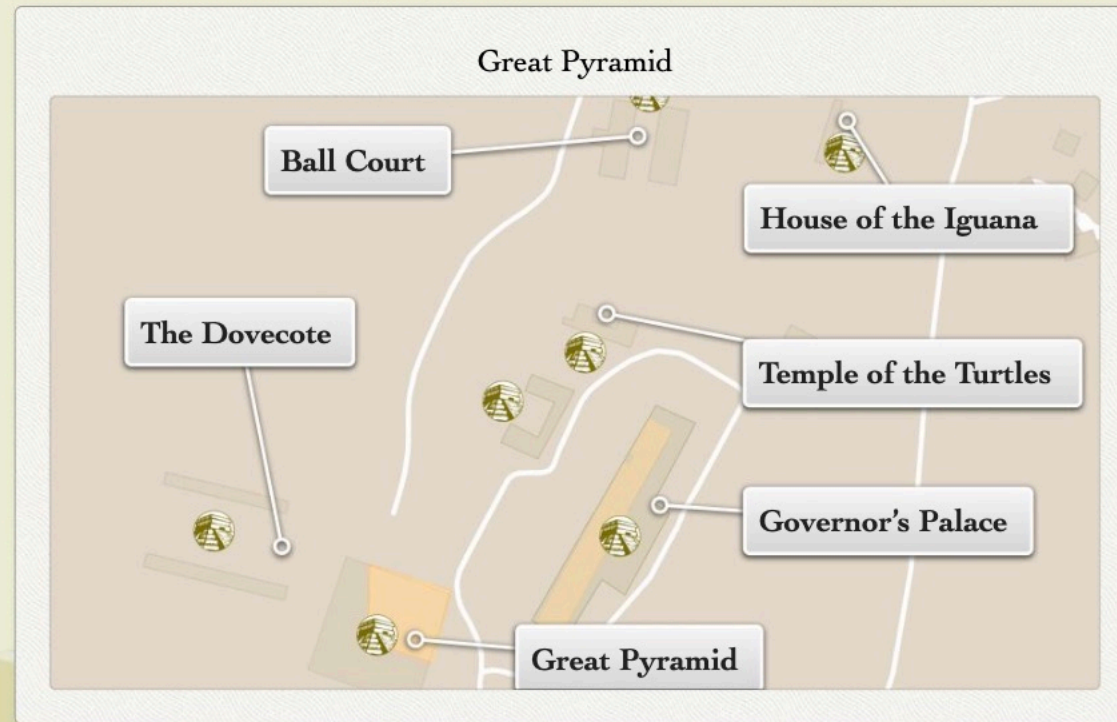
The House of the Iguana in Uxmal, also known as the Iguana Building, was probably built in the year 900. It shows a decoration very different from that seen in buildings already known in Uxmal, such as the Palace of the Governor or the Quadrangle of the Birds.

The frieze of the construction was decorated much simpler, smoother and with very few ornaments on top of a set of three columns that alternate with designs of frets and smooth ashlar. Here you can find the early Puuc style, combined with elements of ancient design.

Its use is unknown, but it's speculated that it was intended for the civil administration or for the residence of the ballplayers before starting the game because it's near the ball court of Uxmal.

The Iguana Building is one of the few that have an elongated vault with no intervening walls to support it, it shows a large vaulted porch 29 meters long and only three wide, which covers the entire façade of the building and consists of 12 spans and 11 columns. This type of entry is uncommon in the Puuc region and is considered to be an example of the influence of Chichén Itzá on Uxmal architecture.

LOCATION OF THE SACRED CENOTE IN CHICHEN ITZA



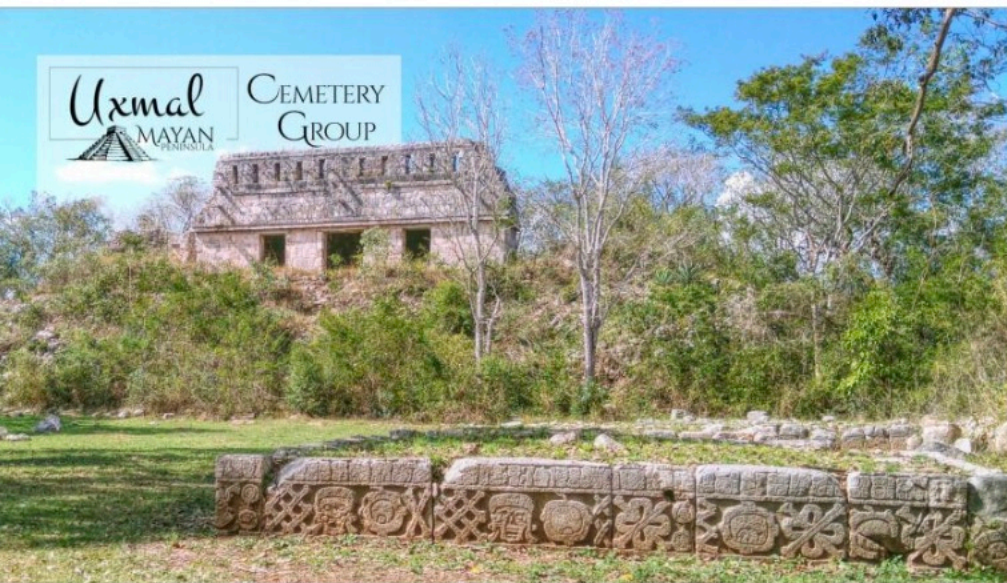
The house of the Iguana in Uxmal is located near the Pyramid of the Magician, but even closer to the Ball Court.

OTHER
BUILDINGS
IN UXMAL

THE CEMETERY GROUP

On the south side, the rubble of a large truncated pyramid with a temple on the top stands out, which was ascended by a staircase located in the front.

Another remarkable structure, a vaulted construction, is located to the west: it's a major pyramid that supported three temples, of which only the central building remains standing. The lateral constructions, of smaller proportions, have almost disappeared.

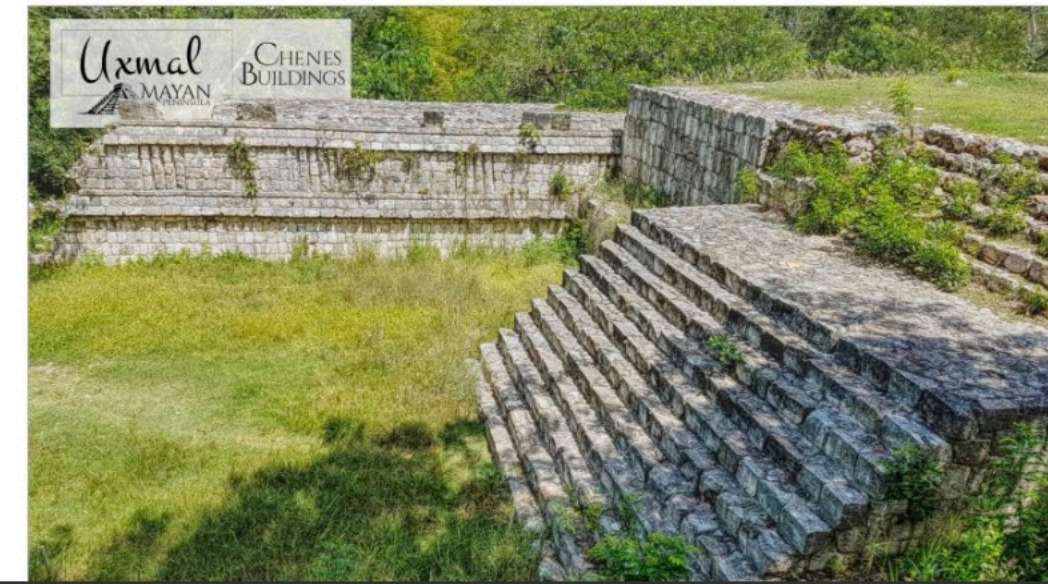


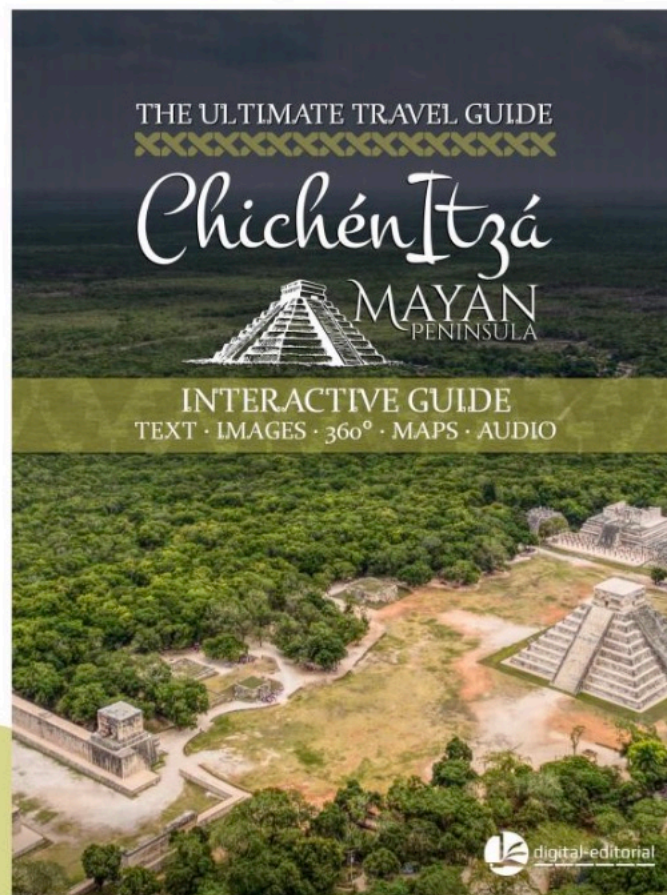
The main temple of this platform has three entrances on its eastern front and two lateral ones, one on the north side and another on the south. The sides were filled when they were discovered, so it's thought that the building was going to be used as a substructure of another major one, which was not built.

THE CHENES BUILDINGS

There are a couple of buildings known as Chenes Buildings that are on the west side of the Governor's Palace. These 2 buildings are older than the platform, so they're in very bad shape and seem to be set into the ground.

Their name comes because of the type of construction known as Chenes, an oddity for cities built in the Puuc region.





ALSO AVAILABLE

Chichén Itzá Travel Guide 2019

[Learn more and download.](#)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE
MAYAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES



[Visit mayanpeninsula.com](http://mayanpeninsula.com) to learn more about Dzibilchaltun.



ADMISSION FEE

When visiting most of the Mayan archeological sites you need to pay 2 fees, one for the Yucatán Tax Administration Agency, and a second one for the National Institute of Arts and History.

FREE ADMISSION

- Free admission for Mexican Citizens on Sundays.
- Free admission every day for Mexican Citizens with the following valid IDs: Older than 60 years, retired, pensioned, teachers, students, children under 13 and handicapped.

GENERAL ADMISSION

State fee: \$383 MXN

Federal fee: \$75 MXN

Total: \$313 MXN

MEXICAN CITIZENS

State fee: \$101 MXN

Federal fee: \$75 MXN

Total: \$176 MXN

YUCATÁN STATE CITIZENS

State fee: \$0 MXN

Federal fee: \$70 MXN

Total: \$75 MXN

BEST TIME TO VISIT UXMAL

The Best time to visit Uxmal depends on your schedule and likes because you might like large crowds or be the only one there. For large crowds go on a Mexican Holiday, and between 11 am and 2 pm.

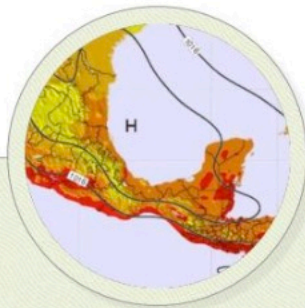
On the other hand, if you like to be practically the only one there, visit Uxmal on a rainy day, or be there at 8 am.





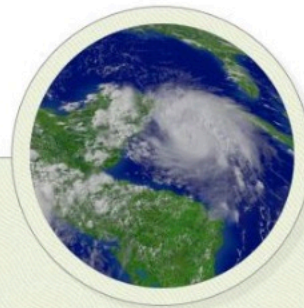
General Weather in the State of Yucatan

Uxmal is located in the Yucatan Peninsula south of the Tropic of Cancer and surrounded by warm tropic waters from the Gulf of México and the Pacific Ocean which means it has a warm and humid tropical weather.



Temperature in Uxmal

The temperatures in the Mayan Peninsula are very high and constant throughout the year between 28°C in December-January and 35°C in May-August.



Rain and hurricanes

The Mayan Peninsula has two rainy seasons between May and October, and between November and April, of course, this season may come before and after these months.

Since there are no mountains in the Mayan Peninsula, hurricanes have no obstacles to slow them down, which makes the land vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes coming from the East. The tropical hurricane season starts on May and ends in December.



The best months to visit Uxmal

The best time to visit Uxmal according to months is between March and May because there's not a lot of rain and there's also not that much tourism.

After these months, the second-best time to visit Uxmal is between December and February because of the weather, but the downside is that there's a lot of tourists, so try to get there early.



Best hours to visit Chichen Itza

The best time during the day is between 8 and 11 am, and if you're not an early bird, you can get there between 2 and 3 pm.

RECOMMENDATIONS WHEN VISITING UXMAL

Some of the Uxmal recommendations you find here may be common sense like drink lots of water and protect yourself from UV rays, but I recommend you read all of them to learn a couple of things you may not have thought about.

Keep yourself hydrated

The first of our recommendations is take a few liters of water on your backpack because you're going to sweat, plus the weather is very hot and humid.

Wear comfortable shoes

You may wear sandals, but it's best to take your hiking or tennis shoes. The pathways are a bit uneven unpaved, also you'll have to keep an eye out for errant rocks and sticks.

Plan your route

If you're just looking to take a couple of amazing pictures in front of the main pyramid, and other nearby constructions, there's no need to plan the route; but if you want to see everything, it's best to plan ahead so you know what you want to see, and where it is.

Be patient

Lots of people visit Uxmal, and most of them get there between 11 am and 1 pm, so if you're expecting to take a picture by yourself on top of the Great Pyramid, that may be a bit difficult. So, you can wait, or just take the picture and then edit your photo later.

Protect yourself from harmful UV rays

This is one of the most important recommendations because you may find some shades under the trees, but most of the time, you will be under direct sunlight, so make sure to use sunscreen, a hat, and it may also be a good idea to take an umbrella with you.

Hire a guide (or not)

Other than taking amazing pictures, a must when you visit Uxmal is to know what you're looking at and a little bit of history. So, you have 2 options, read before you go, or hire a tour guide.

Avoid large crowds

Uxmal can get very crowded depending on the season, schedule and day of the week. There's not much we can do about the season because we usually plan our trip depending on other factors, but try to avoid Sundays because any citizen with a valid Mexican ID gets in for free.

Another thing to look out for if you want to avoid large crowds in Uxmal is that most of the tour buses get there at around 11 am, so if it's in your hands, try to get there at 8 am, or after 2 pm.

No drones or tripods allowed

You may freely take pictures and video with your handheld camera or smartphone, but you have to pay a small fee for shooting video with a pro camera. Also, keep in mind you can't use drones.

If you really need to use a tripod, there's a special permission to use one, but it might take some valuable time out of your visit to get it.

Get a tour

While driving yourself may give you the freedom to stay the time you need and stopping to eat wherever you want, it might be tiring for the driver. So, it might be a good idea to get a tour to Uxmal because most of them include the entry ticket, a tour guide, food, and drinks, so you don't have to worry about anything else other

Bring cash

While traveling in México, it's always best to carry cash because you never know when you can pay with a credit or debit card. Even when they accept them, they may not work properly, try to carry cash with you.

Bring mosquito repellent

It depends on the season, but most of the year there are lots of mosquitos, so I would recommend taking with you some mosquito repellent in the form of liquid, bracelet, sticker, or whatever works for you.

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PRIVATE
TOURS

RECOMMENDATIONS IF YOU'RE DRIVING

Get there early (or late)

Try to get there between 8 and 10 am because most tour buses arrive between 11 am and 1 pm, plus it's not that hot when you arrive that early.

If you're not an early bird, try to get there between 2 and 3 pm, when the tour buses start to leave.

Toll booths

You can drive through most of the Yucatán Peninsula without toll booths, so if you're driving from Mérida, you won't find any of them. But from Cancún, you may find a couple of them.

Time your trip

Depending on where you are staying, you should time your trip. For example, if you want to get there at 8 am from Mérida, you should leave at around 7:00 am.

Leave on a full tank

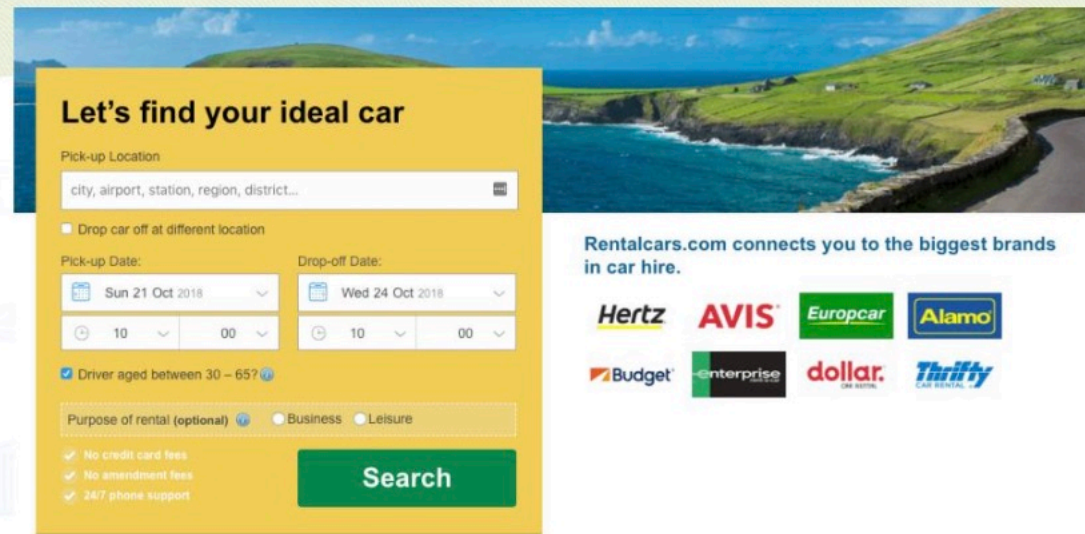
You may find some gas stations along the way, but it's better to just fill up your tank before you leave so you don't have to stop.

Car A/C is a must

If you rent a car, make sure it has a working A/C, even while driving at high speed on the highway, you may need to cool off.

RENTAL CARS

If you're looking to **rent** a car in the **Mayan Peninsula**, consider [rentalcars.com](https://www.rentalcars.com) where you can find Big Brands, Huge Choice, and Massive Savings.



Let's find your ideal car

Pick-up Location
city, airport, station, region, district...

☐ Drop car off at different location

Pick-up Date: Sun 21 Oct 2018
Drop-off Date: Wed 24 Oct 2018

☒ Driver aged between 30 – 65?

Purpose of rental (optional) ☐ Business ☐ Leisure

☒ No credit card fees
☒ No amendment fees
☒ 24/7 phone support

Search

Rentalcars.com connects you to the biggest brands in car hire.

Hertz AVIS Europcar Alamo
Budget Enterprise Dollar Thrifty

Rentalcars.com

HOW TO GET TO UXMAL

Uxmal is located in México, west of the state of Yucatán, 85 km south of the city of Mérida

So, if you're visiting any of the popular cities in Yucatan like Mérida, Valladolid, or Santa Elena, you can arrive in a comfortable and safe way, using any means of transportation like:

TOUR BUSES CAR RENTAL OR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



TOURS TO ÚXMAL

You can get a complete experience to Uxmal with the hiring of a Tour Agency like [Mayan Peninsula](#) that can offer you different packages with everything to turn your trip to Uxmal into a unique experience.

The Classic Uxmal Tour will provide full transportation either by bus or van from the hotel where you're staying or from any other pick up point.

The tour includes the price of the tickets with a guide included, which will give you a tour through the site with some for free time.

The guides are certified and speak English, some of them even speak multiple languages.

You can search for tours to Uxmal from different platforms like:

Viator (Trip Advisor), Get your Guide, Expedia and many others, but we also offer tours to Uxmal in different categories:

- All Inclusive Private Tours
 - Local experiences
- and the list goes on.

Learn more from here:

[Mayan Peninsula Travel Agency](#)



TOP 5 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING THE BEST ÚXMAL TOUR

Taking a Tour to Uxmal is a must whenever you visit the Mayan Peninsula, whether you're staying in Mérida, Cancún, or anywhere in the state of Yucatán.

Since this is a highly touristic region, there are lots of options to take to choose from, now the question is, who should you go with?

There are several things to consider when choosing the best Uxmal Tour between the hundreds out there, but these are the top 5: