

A Maya Journey of Ceremony and Celebration



Spiritual Guide and Aj'qij' Tat Rigoberto Itzep leads the Wajshak'ib B'atz' fire ritual for the K'iché Maya "New Year" – the first day of this current 260-day sacred calendar cycle, in Momostenango, Guatemala.

Mission Momos–Copán 2010

October 22–31



Wajshak'ib B'atz'



New Maya cosmogram that features imagery from the carved stelae at the site of Izpapa, by tour guide Jim Reed.

This is another major manifestation among the many goals and projects in support of preserving and protecting Maya cultural traditions for future generations, on behalf of:



The Maya
Conservancy

Preserving the Mesoamerican Legacy™



Mission Statement

The Maya Conservancy's purpose is to aid in the preservation and protection of Maya and Pre-Maya archaeological sites throughout Mesoamerica. The Maya Conservancy (TMC) provides educational guidance and financial assistance to private and governmental bodies in these countries to aid in the preservation and protection of historically and culturally important sites.

Goals

The Maya Conservancy hopes to work in collaboration with other non-profit, governmental and educational agencies, who are also working to preserve endangered archaeological sites. These collaborative efforts will enhance efforts to preserve national patrimony. TMC will be a source of funding for the purchase of real property to preserve Maya Cultural Heritage sites, to promote Maya Culture and archaeological identity, to conduct research throughout archaeological finds as well as plan seminars and conferences.

Our program for the conservation and preservation of Maya archaeological sites was developed over several years of increasing awareness on the part of the archaeological community that many critical sites crucial for the understanding of ancient cultures were on private lands with no protection from plunderers and looters. The government entities in charge of protecting these sites have limited resources and are forced to prioritize on a limited number of sites, with well-recognized sites receiving the most funding.

Izapa

The Izapa site is owned by three separate private landowners who raise crops throughout the site and is bisected by a highway, which is a major artery to the proximate Mexico-Guatemala border. Through raised awareness, after a series of lectures, local Mexicans were able to divert a major project for putting a four-lane highway through the center of the site. The new highway is now projected to go around it.

The site is of great importance to scientists because of its early religious implications. Because of the imagery depicted on numerous carved stelae and monuments, it is seen by many to be the possible birthplace of the Maya creation story, the *Popol Vuh*. Many scholars have singled out Izapa as being in the area where what eventually became the Maya sacred and solar calendars were conceived. It was certainly a center for early mathematics and astronomy.



Great news: The site needs an area for visitor parking, a visitor's center, an educational program, a community outreach program and a museum. In June 2010, a piece of land adjacent to the site was purchased by a local Mexican non-profit organization created for that purpose. Since that organization is affiliated with TMC, many donors to The Maya Conservancy are donating specifically for this project.

Terzuola

The Terzuola site is a privately owned 2-acre plot of farmland in the Department of Zacapa, Guatemala. On the Discovery Channel program "The Mysteries of Jade" filmed in 1999, the program showed "a recently looted tomb". This looting of tombs is a regular activity that could be stopped if the property could be acquired by The Maya Conservancy and protected by a caretaker. The site could be opened to the public as an educational area to acquaint visitors with a Maya site in the Motagua River Valley.

Mission Momos-Copán 2010

This travel opportunity, "Mission Momos-Copán 2010", is a concept that has been conceived and developed by the directors of TMC. This journey is being organized to bring together participants, scholars/researchers and Maya spiritual guides, in order to experience modern Maya ritual and to offer educational programs about aspects concerning Izapa, Copán and understanding 2012, for participants and the general public in Antigua and Copán. A portion of the participant trip cost will be used as an advance donation to Tat Rigoberto Itzep for his three-day "Expo Maya" public educational event, as well as to The Maya Conservancy.



K'iché spiritual guide Tat Rigoberto Itzep Chanchavac will be leading the Wajshak'ib B'atz' ceremony. It will take place early on Sunday, October 24, at the Nima Sab'al altar that is located high on a mountaintop above Momostenango, Guatemala.

Geographics • Mission Momos–Copán across Space



Three Maya Ceremonies: in Momostenango, Ixim'ché and Copán. Visiting three Maya sacred sites: Copán, Ixim'ché and Quiriguá, as well as two nights in Santiago Atitlán. Base of operations: La Antigua, Guatemala

Guatemala

One of the most beautiful and culturally rich countries in Central America, Guatemala is bursting with beautifully striking features, rich biodiversity and an indigenous culture with a powerful and vibrant identity. Guatemala has a fascinating environment, with over 8000 species of plants in 19 different ecosystems. It overflows with an abundance of animals; 250 species of mammals, 600 species of birds and 200 species of reptiles and amphibians. Guatemala is also home to the resplendent quetzal, the national bird, which is often used to symbolize all of Mesoamerica. The landscape is awe-inspiring, from mountainous forest highlands, to jungle plains and volcanic beaches. There are 37 volcanoes (more than any other country in the world) and you'll get to see two of the three that are active. Guatemala's indigenous population still accounts for up to approximately half of the population, one of the largest indigenous populations in the Northern hemisphere. They continue to practice ancient Maya beliefs. In modern Guatemala, there are still over 20 Mayan languages in use.





Mission Momos–Copán Daily Itinerary

Toj rules the day – It represents Grandfather Sun and his representative on Earth, Tojil, the sacred ceremonial fire. It symbolizes the law of cause and effect; and atonement.



12.19.17.14.9
6 Toj
Thunder–Pain
Muluk

Direction
North

Element
Air

Key
Fire and
atonement

Growth
Liberation
from the past

Colors
Red, white

Nahwal
Fire, earth,
mushrooms

Friday, October 22

Participants arrive in Guatemala City's La Aurora International Airport (GUA). When your flight arrives, we'll meet you at the airport and take you to your hotel accommodations in the quaint town of La Antigua, about 45–60 minutes away.



Note: If your flight arrives before or by 1 pm in the afternoon, we'll take you to the **National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology**, located near the airport. This museum has the most complete collection of archaeological pieces of Guatemalan Maya culture, including a collection of jade, ceramic artifacts, carved stelae, royal tombs and indigenous textiles. Dioramas exhibit life in a Maya city and a Guatemalan village.

The city of **La Antigua**, initially called Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala (St. James of the Knights of Guatemala), after the patron saint of the Spanish conquistadors, was founded in 1543. For 200 years it was the capital of an area that is now Central America and the Mexican state of Chiapas. Along with Lima and Mexico City, it was one of the three great cities of the Americas and a major political, religious, intellectual and economic center.



However, late in 1773, a series of devastating earthquakes struck, reducing much of the city's elegance to rubble. Reluctantly, the government relocated to a safer site in the Ermita Valley, 28 miles east, where Guatemala City now stands. Recent restoration projects have transformed this once-rustic hamlet into a hip and trendy – but still captivating – destination. Colonial and cobble-stoned-streets La Antigua has three beautiful volcanoes that surround the city and usually at least one of them can be viewed down every street. Fuego volcano is presently semi-active.

In the evening, we have an **Introductory Meet & Greet** with cocktails and a dinner arranged for all participants, invited scholars and sponsors. Interacting with and getting to know everyone involved with Mission Momos–Copán 2010 is encouraged. We're scheduled to have entertainment by renowned flutist **Pablo Collado** and **presentations** by our scholars in English.



Maya musical flute music by Pablo Collado.
Check him out at: www.pablocollado.com

Note: We will have the musical talents of Pablo Collado with us throughout our adventure. He is Guatemalan, but currently lives right outside its borders, in Belize. What a blessing to have him serenading us not only before meals and presentations, but also as we enter and exit the Maya sacred sites we will visit and the international borders we pass through!



Hotel, overnight in La Antigua For each night of our journey, The Maya Conservancy has secured very nice accommodations. Most hotels have a restaurant and bar, some will have a swimming pool. You will be pleasantly surprised and enjoy yourself immensely.



Daily Planner • Mission Momos—Copán across Time

DAY	12.19.17.14.9 6 Toj Thunder-Pain • Muluk Friday, October 22	12.19.17.14.10 7 Tz'í' Dog • Ok Saturday, October 23	12.19.17.14.11 8 B'atz' Thread • Chuwen Sunday, October 24	12.19.17.14.12 9 E Tooth-Road • 'Eb Monday, October 25	12.19.17.14.13 10 Aj Cane • Reed • B'en Tuesday, October 26	12.19.17.14.14 11 I'x Jaguar-Throat • 'Ix Wednesday, October 27	12.19.17.14.15 12 Tz'ikin Bird-Silver • Men Thursday, October 28	12.19.17.14.16 13 Ajmaq Sinner • K'ib Friday, October 29	12.19.17.14.17 1 No'j Knowhow • Kab'an Saturday, October 30	12.19.17.14.18 2 Tjjax Knife Edge • Etz'nab' Sunday, October 31
DAILY ACTIVITY	Arrival of Mission Momos-Copán participants at La Aurora International Airport, Guatemala City, Guatemala Depending on arrival time, possible visit to the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology <i>Transfer to hotels in La Antigua, Guatemala</i>	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> Visit to Jade Museum and Factory Drive to Momostenango <i>Lunch along the way, perhaps in Tecpán</i> Tat Rigoberto's Expo Maya	8 B'atz Sunrise Ceremony at Nima Sab'al <i>Brunch at hotel</i> Drive to Panajachel <i>Lunch in Panajachel</i> Underwater City: Samabaj Museum <i>(then we can take boats across lake depending on late afternoon lake conditions)</i>	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> Encounter with Maximón <i>Lunch in Santiago</i> Afternoon Free <i>(or we'll do something interesting with Vinny)</i>	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> <i>Drive to Ixim'ché</i> <i>Lunch on the road outside of Tecpán</i> Ceremony at Ixim'ché with Antolin and Nicolasa Visit on-site Museum <i>Drive to La Antigua</i>	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> Drive to Quiriguá <i>Lunch at Hotel Santa Mónica (7 miles from site)</i> Visit site of Quiriguá	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> Drive through Honduran border at El Florido to Copán <i>Lunch on the road</i> arrive at hotels in Copán Copán Sunset Ceremony with Antolin and Nicolasa	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> Visit site of Copán <i>Bag lunch delivered to site</i> Continue to visit site of Copán and underground tunnels as well as on-site Museum with La Rosalila replica	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> Visit Copán Sculptural Museum in town or Zip-lining! Drive through Honduran border at El Florido back to La Antigua <i>Lunch on the road</i> Drive to La Antigua	<i>Breakfast at hotel</i> International participants driven back to La Aurora International Airport in Guatemala City for departure
	Arrival Meet & Greet Cocktails, Dinner Presentations with Garth Norman, Janice Van Cleve and Jim Reed Hotel in La Antigua	Evening Free <i>Dinner out in the town in Momostenango</i> <i>Remember to the Maya, it's New Years!</i> Hotel Otoño	<i>Dinner at hotel</i> Evening Free Hotel in Santiago Atitlán	<i>Dinner at hotel</i> Meeting with Vincent Stanzione Same hotel in Santiago Atitlán	Evening Free <i>Dinner out in the town</i> Same hotel in La Antigua	Evening Free <i>Dinner at hotel</i> Hotel Santa Mónica in Los Amates (with swimming pool)	Maya-style Dinner with archaeologist David Sedat Maya Sweat Bath (possibly) Hacienda San Lucas (and/or another hotel in Copán)	Dinner at Hacienda San Lucas Presentations with Garth Norman, Janice Van Cleve and Jim Reed Hacienda San Lucas (and/or another hotel in Copán)	Farewell Dinner Presentation by Gaspar Gonzalez Entertainment with Pablo Collado and Grupo Maya Kaq'chik'el Same hotel in La Antigua	<i>Everyone makes it back safe and sound to their point of origin ... refreshed and renewed.</i>



12.19.17.8.10
7 Tz'í'
Dog • Ok

Direction
South

Element
Water

Key
Law and authority

Growth
Eliminating authoritarianism and drastic actions, cultivating love

Colors
Yellow, white, beige

Nahwal
Dog, coyote

Our Day-by-Day Itinerary, continued:

Saturday, October 23

Breakfast, a walk around the Central Square, then **Mary Lou Ridinger** will give us a personal tour of the **Jades SA** jade factory and museum. Featured in *National Geographic*, Mary Lou and her recently deceased husband Jay, were the original discoverers of the ancient Maya jade quarries. Jades SA employs about 50 lapidaries and is the largest jade factory in Central America. The showrooms have a fantastic collection of replica masks, including one of King Pakal, found in the Temple of Inscriptions of Palenque, dated 692 CE.

Jades SA has recently opened an area of their museum dedicated to Maya cosmology with a representation of the ballcourt of Izapa aligned to the winter solstice – an alignment significant to the unfolding of December 21, 2012. The Ridingers have discovered new and unique colors of jadite, surpassing other sources of jade in the world! Check out Jades SA at: www.jademaya.com

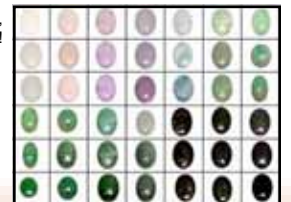


Jade replica of Pakal's mask.



Superb craftsmanship and a jade marimba!

Their jade color chart, superb colors!



Saturday continued on next page



Day of travel ... and preparations for the 8 B'atz' ritual

Tz'ik' rules the day – signifying the staff used by indigenous authorities, as well as the tail of a dog. It is the sign of both earthly and cosmic law and authority. The symbol of great scribes.



12.19.17.8.10
7 Tz'ik'
Dog • Ok

Direction
South

Element
Water

Key
Law and authority

Growth
Eliminating authoritarianism and drastic actions, cultivating love

Colors
Yellow, white, beige

Nahwal
Dog, coyote

Saturday, October 23, cont.

After your tour of the jade museum, we'll have our things packed, and head up the Pan American Highway, into the Guatemalan Highlands, to the town of **Momostenango**. We'll stop for lunch along the way, probably outside of Tecpán.

Upon arriving in town, we'll first head to our hotel to unload and settle in. Later, we can walk to the town square and market. Then head up the hill to visit Tat Rigoberto's **Expo Maya**. We can then check out **Paclom** altar, located on the same hilltop. You will be amazed at all of the rituals going on at one time, that actually start this day before 8 B'atz'.

We'll head back through town and find dinner in local restaurants. You have the evening free to relax or return to Paclom where a musical group will start playing as part of the celebration. But be aware, you might want to get to sleep early as we'll be getting up really early for the 8 B'atz' ceremony.



Tat Rigoberto Itzep is a very prominent K'iché spiritual guide (or Ajq'ij) in Momostenango. He maintains a year-round Maya learning center named "Misión Maya" within his residence compound. For three days on and approaching 8 B'atz', he rents a salon on the hill next to the Paclom altar and sponsors an event called "Expo Maya". You'll receive a cacao bean at the front stairs as a token to enter through a giant double-headed feathered serpent. Within the rooms are educative displays to teach about Maya cosmology and traditions, textile weaving, the Maya ballgame (with a real rubber ball to handle) and a handicraft market.



During the day and all night long Momostekos perform their own private or group ceremonies in honor of the ushering in of the next 260-day sacred calendar cycle. They call it the "Maya New Year"! Located on the hill in the center of town is the altar of Paclom. It is a totally unique environment of intense ritual that you can witness.



12.19.17.8.11
8 B'atz'
Thread • Chuwen

Direction
East

Element
Fire

Key
Look for answers in time and space, weaving the threads to the ancestors

Growth
Creativity and community service

Colors
Red, orange

Nahwal
Monkey

Sunday, October 24

Today is a special day for Tat Rigoberto as he conducts the "official" **8 B'atz' fire ceremony** for us at his hometown group shine named Nima Sab'al, that located high atop a mountain overlooking Momostenango. It is the day named 8 B'atz' – a day to weave the threads of connection to the ancestors. In February, the ritual we participated in on behalf of The Maya Conservancy was to initiate this current 260-day calendar cycle. Now, we'll help initiate in the next sacred cycle. We'll get up and meet the K'iché guides at Expo Maya at 4 am, then head up to the mountaintop. The ceremony is timed to the rising sun. It starts at 5 am and ends at 6 am. Afterwards, we'll head back by the Expo Maya to give the guides who participated in the ceremony a donation. We'll return to our hotel, pack up our belongings, get a bite to eat, and head out to Lake Atilán.

Note: The K'iché consider that the Wajshak'ib B'atz' ritual is performed on behalf of and for the personal spiritual benefit of the participants present. Participants are encouraged to bring along a cash donation that will be divided among the spiritual guides present after the ceremony. This personal donation must come from you, not the TMC.

Our sacred caravan will pass down through the mountain filled with pine forests, cultivated fields and great views of volcanoes along the way.



Our Wajshak'ib 8 B'atz' ceremony on February 6, 2010, was very special and deeply moving. The Ajq'ijaab' started by making a cosmogram on the ground with sugar, then loaded on offerings of copal incense, candles, cacao and tobacco. Specifically-colored flowers were placed in the four directions. And a surprise to me, our ceremony was broadcast live on "Radio Maya" for Maya people all around the Highlands to celebrate in the "New Year". Photos: Oscar Palencia.



Sunday continued on next page



Wajshak'ib B'atz' • the start of life, infinite time

The day sign symbolizes cosmic phenomena and original wisdom. B'atz' is the deity that created Earth and Sky, the Creator of life and consciousness.



12.19.17.8.11
8 B'atz'
Thread • Chuwen

Direction
East

Element
Fire

Key
Look for
answers in time
and space,
weaving the
threads to the
ancestors

Growth
Creativity and
community
service

Colors
Red, orange

Nahwal
Monkey

Sunday, October 24, cont.

After our ceremony, we'll head towards **Lake Atitlán**. When we arrive at **Panajachel**, we can have a nice lunch by lake side. If time permits, we'll check out a new little **museum** that displays recently excavated artifacts from the site of **Samabaj** which now lies 55 feet under water near the mouth of Santiago Bay. Depending on the late afternoon conditions of the lake, we may be able to take a boat across the lake to our destination for the evening, **Santiago Atitlán**.

We'll arrive at our hotel, and from there you have the evening free. You can enjoy a nice dinner at the hotel or head into town in a "Tuk Tuk" – the local version of a three-wheeled motorized rickshaw/taxi. Later, back at the hotel, take a dip in the lake or the swimming pool. They also have a lakeside hot tub and steam bath.

Lake Atitlán

Atitlán, the Nahuatl word for "place of water", is called Choi Lake by the modern-day local Tz'utujil Maya people, which means "near the water". More than 85,000 years ago, a volcanic eruption wiped out all forms of life from Mexico to Costa Rica, leaving a huge crater. As time went by, water levels built up inside the caldera, which eventually became completely closed due to the flow of lava from the new volcanoes. When the famous novelist Aldous Huxley visited Guatemala, he referred to it as being "the most beautiful lake in the world".

Several ancient Maya archaeological sites have been found at the lake. Samabaj, located approximately 55 feet below the current lake level, appears to be from at least the pre-Classic period. There are remains of multiple groups of buildings, including one particular group of large buildings that are believed to be the city center.

A second site, Chiutinamit, where the remains of a city were found, was discovered by local fishermen who "noticed what appeared to be a city underwater". During consequent investigations, pottery shards were recovered from the site by divers, which enabled the dating of the site to the late pre-Classic period (600 BCE – 250 CE).



Three spectacular volcanoes – Tolimán, Atitlán and San Pedro – surround the lake itself, and there are twelve villages (named after the Twelve Apostles), situated around its shoreline.



Posada de Santiago has comfortable stone cottages, a pool, restaurant with a bar, and is nestled on the shore of beautiful Lake Atitlán. In the gardens surrounding the cottages, you will find papayas, bananas and palms growing next to mountain orchids and flowers. Plants that struggle to survive on window sills in northern climes grow to dimensions that make them almost unrecognizable here. All of the rooms are tastefully decorated, most with a fireplace, and a private garden with a hammock. And the restaurant has great food!





A full day and evening to enjoy Santiago Atitlán

The day sign "E" symbolizes the path of destiny, travel, the road of life, the guide, and the means. It represents the stairs between the world, the upperworld, and the underworld.



12.19.17.8.12
9 E
Tooth-Road • 'Eb

Direction
West

Element
Earth

Key
The sacred way

Growth
Experience
acquired
through travel
and from
wise elders

Colors
White,
light blue

Nahwal
Wildcat

Monday, October 25

After breakfast, we'll can seek out our personal **encounter with Maximón** – who is more than a local legend! Maximón is said to be a manifestation of the Maya god Mam, who reigned over the five-day period between the end of one year and the beginning of the next. When Catholicism was superimposed over Maya beliefs during the 16th and 17th centuries, Mam became integrated with St. Simon. His name combines *max*, the Mayan word for tobacco, and Simon. The Santa Cruz cofradia is responsible for taking care of Maximón, which spends the year "hidden" in the home of one of its members. He is seated in a place of honor, surrounded by flickering candles and burning incense, offerings of cigarettes, Indian liquor and money at his feet. Visitors ask his help in resolving health, love, family and economic problems. It is considered a serious breach of etiquette to visit and leave nothing.

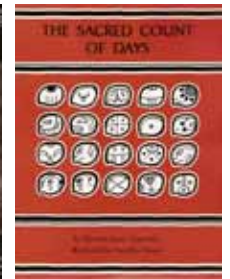
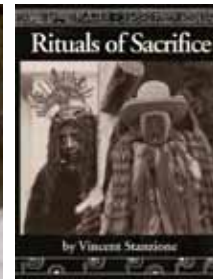
Then you have the afternoon free. We can eat at a restaurant around town or head back to the hotel. We can split up and go our separate ways or perhaps take a boat ride over to the lakeside town of San Pedro to have lunch there. We also have **Vincent Stanzione** who will be suggesting things we can do in the afternoon.

Santiago Atitlán is also the home of the Cojol Ya Association Weaving Center and Museum, founded by the Cojol Ya Association of Maya Women Weavers. The museum shows the history and process of backstrap weaving, and the evolution of the traditional costume of the Tz'utujil.

In the evening, you can have dinner at the hotel. Vincent Stanzione will be joining with our group and he is offering to give us a special presentation about Maya spirituality and the calendars.



No trip to Santiago is complete without a visit to Maximón, the smoking-and-drinking Maya-Catholic deity. We'll help you choose the correct offerings, but Indian liquor, cigarettes, cigars or a small sum of cash work best. Take a candle.



Independent Maya researcher **Vincent Stanzione** received his Master of Arts degree in Spanish Literature and Language from the University of Colorado – Boulder. His deep interest in the Maya carried him away from the theoretical landscape of academia. He has lived among the Tz'utujil Maya of Santiago Atitlán since 1987. He is author of numerous books, including *Ritual of Sacrifice*, *Maya Gods and Goddesses* and *The Sacred Count of Days*. Vinnie was with us in Momostenango for the 8 B'atz' ritual on February 6. He is a great person to have around to act as a go-between with the Maya.



Journeying from Santiago to a ceremony at Ixim'ché

The day sign Aj symbolizes the strength of power. It means abundance and the renewal of nature in order to be in harmony with others – possessing sacred knowledge.



12.19.17.14.13
10 Aj
Cane • Reed • B'en

Tuesday, October 26

We'll have breakfast in our hotel, then pack up our things so we can head back around the lake and up to the Pan American highway. Perhaps you will feel like you are leaving paradise as we bid farewell to beautiful Lake Atitlán. We can have lunch at one of the restaurants in Tecpán again. Then, we have a fire ceremony arranged with local Kaq'chik'el Maya spiritual guides at the ancient site of Ixim'ché.



Tuesday continued on next page



Aj is a day for authority, a day for the sacred altar

Aj is unity, power, and the seven virtues of the divine power: Fire, Earth, Air, Water, Heart of Sky, Heart of Earth, and the Center. Aj is also clairvoyance and unexpected dreams.



12.19.17.14.13
10 Aj
Cane - Reed - B'en

Direction
North

Element
Air

Key
Abundance
and rebirth

Growth
Return to
the origin,
social
influence

Colors
Brown, white,
green

Tuesday, October 26, cont.

After our lunch, we'll head over to the nearby ancient Kaq'chik'el capital of Ixim'ché. The site is situated on an artificially leveled mountaintop amid a lofty pine forest. Our good friends and Kaq'chik'el spiritual guides **Antolín González Sancir** and his wife **Nicolasa Chumil Guigui** will lead a **fire ceremony**.

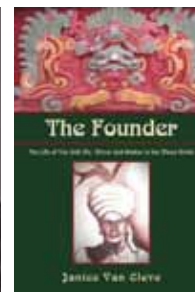
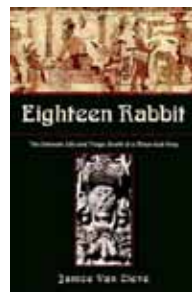
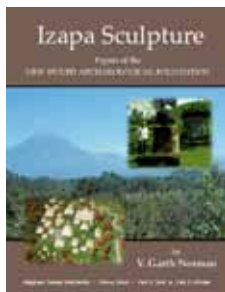
Ixim'ché

A Post-Classic Maya site, Ixim'ché was founded in 1470 CE by the Kaq'chik'el people when they were forced from territory controlled by the K'iché tribe. The ceremonial center is isolated by ravines on three sides, and an artificial creek separated it from the rest of the population. It has four large and two small plazas, and each main group has at least two temples. Along with palaces for nobles, there are two ballcourts, the largest is 40 m long and 7 m wide. Spaniards under Pedro de Alvarado arrived in the Highlands in 1524. With the Kaq'chik'el as allies, they conquered the Guatemalan polities which had been enemies of Ixim'ché. On July 25, Alvarado founded Tecpán, the first colonial capital of Guatemala, 3 km north of Ixim'ché. This action led to the outbreak of hostilities between the Kaq'chik'el and the Spanish and the ultimate destruction and abandonment of Ixim'ché in 1526. The Kaq'chik'el later revolted against the conquerors, forcing them to leave Tecpán and go to what became Guatemala's second Capitol, Ciudad Vieja (on the outskirts of La Antigua) 14 years later.



We are on sacred ground. Kaq'chik'el spiritual guide Antolín González Sancir asked permission from the last two Kaq'chik'el warrior kings before starting the ceremony.

After our ceremony, we can check out the **onsite museum**, then we'll head back to the same hotel in La Antigua. In the evening, if we didn't have our presentations at our Meet & Greet on Saturday night, we can do them now. If not, you have the evening free to wander the town and find a restaurant for dinner. We can make suggestions.



V. Garth Norman is an archaeologist, epigrapher, archaeo-astronomer, and art historian with graduate degrees from Brigham Young University. He is best known for his pioneering research of the early or pre-Maya sculpture at Izapa. Norman has over 40 years of professional archaeological research experience and cultural resource contract work in Mesoamerica and in the Inter-mountain Western U.S. He has been a Research Associate with BYU's New World Archaeological Foundation from 1965 to 1976 and during that time published a two-volume monograph on Izapa Sculpture (Paper #30, 1973, 1976). Norman has authored over 250 professional papers and contract reports and has been the Director of Archaeological Research Consultants since 1982. He is also an advisory board member of The Maya Conservancy. Check out his website at www.vgarthnorman.com

Janice Van Cleave is a journalist, story teller, world traveler, political activist, wine connoisseur, consultant, mountain trails wanderer, president of several boards of directors, Wiccan priestess, gardener, and former Microsoft executive. She received her Masters Degree in Medieval History with a minor in languages. She served as a military intelligence officer in the U.S. Army, a systems analyst for several corporations, and now makes her living from investments and writing. Archaeology is a special interest long held and only now indulged. She returns to history and languages with the passion.

Jim Reed, an independent Maya researcher, is currently the editor of the Institute of Maya Studies newsletter, and a former president of the Institute (2000). Reed's enthusiasm and dedication make him our primary coordinator for Mission Momos-Copán. He is helping to unite our efforts on behalf of the modern Maya Ajq'ijaab/Spiritual Guides. He shares a simple, easy-to-understand, yet colorful interpretation of the 2012 phenomenon that focuses on Maya Creation Centers, the *Popol Vuh* and Izapa. Plus, he has a new program that connects the human body to the nighttime skies. Check out his website at: www.mayaspirituality.com





I'x signifies the creative forces of the Universe

The day sign I'x is the jaguar representing feminine and feline energy, as well as the four B'alameb (Men-Gods), intelligence, the strength of Mother Earth and high magic.



12.19.17.14.14
11 I'x
Jaguar-Throat + I'x

Direction
South

Element
Water

Key
Patience,
astuteness,
and action

Growth
Inner learning
and
high magic

Colors
Yellow, Brown

Nahwal
Jaguar, Ocelotl

Wednesday, October 27

After breakfast in our hotel, some of us might venture to the market to buy some ritual materials for our ceremony tomorrow in Copán. We'll pass the hat around so everyone can contribute and benefit. We'll then head down out of the Highlands towards the Atlantic coast of Guatemala, to visit the ancient Maya site of **Quiriguá**. We hope to stay at Hotel Santa Mónica that is only 7 km from the site. We can unload our things and have lunch at their nice restaurant. In the afternoon, we'll visit the site, then return to the hotel where you have the evening free.



Our first choice to stay near Quiriguá is in Hotel Santa Mónica. It seems to be somewhat of an oasis in a land surrounded by banana plantations.

Quiriguá

Quiriguá is an ancient Maya archaeological site in the department of Izabal in south-eastern Guatemala. It is a medium-sized site covering approximately 3 square km along the lower Motagua River, with the ceremonial center about 1 km from the north bank. During the Maya Classic Period (200–900 CE), Quiriguá was situated at the juncture of several important trade routes. The site was occupied by 200 CE; construction on the acropolis had begun by about 550, and an explosion of grander construction started in the 8th century. All construction had halted by about 850, except for a period of reoccupation in the Early Postclassic (900–1200 CE). Quiriguá shares its architectural and sculptural styles with the nearby Classic Period city of Copán, with whose history it is closely entwined.



Quiriguá is not a large site at all, but it has some of the tallest carved stelae in all the Mayalands. Stela D (center) is 35 feet tall and the full-figure glyphs on the west side of Stela D are magnificent. We'll get to the site after passing thru a banana farm.



Zoomorph P: The front (north) side presents a central sculpted portrait of a youthful Quiriguá ruler, probably Sky Xul, successor to Cauac Sky, in full regalia seated in the cave-like gaping jaws of the reptilian cosmological monster. The rear head of the cosmological monster on the south (back) side is flanked by an extensive inscriptions that refer both to the then current ruler, Sky Xul, and his predecessor Cauac Sky, astronomical events, and the historical relationship between Quiriguá and the larger site of Copán. Monument 9 (above right) commemorates the inauguration of a Quiriguá ruler, probably Jade Sky, around the year 800 CE.

Quiriguá's rapid expansion in the 8th century was tied to king K'ak' Tiliw Chan Yopaat's military victory over Copán in 738. When the greatest king of Copán, Uaxaclajuun Ub'aah K'awiil or "18-Rabbit", was defeated, he was captured and then sacrificed in the Great Plaza at Quiriguá. Before this, Quiriguá had been a vassal state of Copán, but it maintained its independence afterwards. The ceremonial architecture at Quiriguá is quite modest, but the site's importance lies in its wealth of sculpture, including the tallest stone monuments ever erected in the New World.



We travel from Quiriguá to a ceremony at Copán

Tz'ikin means bird, the guardian of all Maya lands. It is intermediation between Ajaw and humans. It is a good day to ask for good luck in the fire ceremony.



12.19.17.14.15
12 Tz'ikin
Bird-Silver - Men

Direction
East

Element
Fire

Key
Intermediation
between
earth and sky

Growth
Intuition,
dreams and
divination

Colors
Dark Blue,
Light Blue,
White

Nahwal
Eagle,
Condor
Quetzal,
Butterfly

Thursday, October 28

After breakfast in our hotel, we'll pack up and head to the border with Honduras. We'll drive past the Motagua River and the Sierra de las Minas mountain range (where many of the jade quarries are found). We'll pass through the dry desert area of Guatemala, around Zacapa, where some folks dress like American cowboys from the Old West. We'll go through customs and have our passports stamped at the little border town of El Florido. From there, the town of **Copán Ruinas** is less than 10 km away. We can have lunch in town.

Note: The Hacienda San Lucas (HSL), that we want to use as our base of operations for two days, is on a mountaintop on the other side of the river from the town. And since the road is muddy and not paved, our big TMC bus won't be able to make it up there. We'll transport up and down in smaller vehicles. The HSL only has 8 rooms, so we're anticipating that our whole group, especially those who prefer the single supplement, will not all be in the same hotel. Presenter and Copán regular, Janice Van Cleve, likes the Casa de Café, centrally located in town. We'll get you situated at one place or the other, but either way, we'll be sure to have you up at the Hacienda San Lucas for a late afternoon, **pre-sunset fire ceremony**. The altar overlooks the Copán valley with views of the river and the site of Copán below.

Our Kaq'chik'el spiritual guides and now good friends Antolín and Nicolasa will lead the ritual. As a group, we will be facilitating the way for them to journey with us from the time of our ceremony in Ixim'ché, until we return to La Antigua.

In the early evening, renowned archaeologist **David Sedat**, who discovered the tombs of Copán's founding lineage, Yax K'uk Mo and his wife (featured in *National Geographic*), will give us a personal slide show at his home and archaeological compound. Named *La Tejera 2012*, his property shelters a wonderful botanical garden featuring many exotic trees and plants – many used medicinally by the ancient Maya. One can view numerous works of art painted by some of Central America's foremost artists in the "native style", or explore jungle pathways that wind down and around like the coils of the Feathered Serpent K'ukulkan to where there is an authentic Maya *Temascal* – a ritual steam bath like the Maya still use to purify body and soul. Before any presentations,

David and his wife and family will personally prepare us a home-cooked Maya meal, complete with a turkey "fit for sacrifice". He also has Noni tea and Maya herbal cosmetics for sale.



View of the Copán River, Valley of Copán.



Serenity at sunset at Hacienda San Lucas.

The chosen place for the fire ceremony is behind the yoga pavilion with a view overlooking the Copán valley.



Owner Flavia Cueva.

Hacienda San Lucas is a 100-year-old family-owned retreat situated in the hills above the site of Copán. The unique and impressive enclave features hand-built, solar-powered adobe rooms, recently restored by **Flavia Cueva**, the owner, manager, and spiritual force behind San Lucas. The restaurant is a culinary destination of its own. Indulge your palate in inspired regional cuisine prepared by their creative local Chorti Maya staff. While here, we can visit *Los Sapos*, the mysterious Maya ceremonial site whose true purpose still confounds archaeologists, but the local folk tradition believes that it holds special powers related to birthing and fertility.



Do you own fertility ceremony in "Los Sapos."



A home-cooked "Maya" meal.

Archaeologist David Sedat (with Jim Reed), David's Red Queen's tomb hot tub, and jaguar steam bath.





Copán ... The Crown Jewel of Maya Sites

Ajmaq signifies the mind in a state of forgiveness, introspection and illumination. It is a day that connects us to a universal vision as well as to our own reality.



12.19.17.14.16
13 Ajmaq
Sinner- K'ib

Direction
West

Element
Earth

Key
Search for
expansion and
transmission

Growth
Forgiveness
and
personal
service

Colors
Gray, Black,
White

Nahwal
Owl, bee,
insects

Friday, October 29

After breakfast in your hotel, we'll spend the whole day at **Copán**. Copán has more sculpted monuments and hieroglyphic inscriptions than any other Maya site.

The ancient city of Copán was described by the famous archaeologist Sylvanus Morely as the Athens of the New World. For 400 years Copán was the principal Maya cultural center, far ahead of other larger and more powerful cities in its development of sculpture, astronomy and hieroglyphic writing. Copán's great **Hieroglyphic Stairway** bears a continuous text of more than 1,250 glyph blocks listing dates and names of the city's rulers. Because of its beautiful artwork, unsurpassed in the Mundo Maya, Copán occupies a special place in the study of ancient civilizations. We'll explore the ruins in-depth in the company of Janice Van Cleve with her informative insights.

We'll get to enter the tunnels that go down to see parts of the original **Rosalila Temple**, but the re-creation of the colorful and ornately sculpted structure in the museum is unprecedented in the Maya world. Yax K'uk Mo's tomb is on another level below that of the Rosalila Temple. The image at right shows how the story originally appeared in *National Geographic* magazine.

We'll have lunch delivered to the site by our friends at Hacienda San Lucas, and eat together in the picnic area. There will be vegetarian options available.

Later, we'll visit Copán's **Museum of Maya Sculpture** which contains some of the finest Maya sculpture ever found. We'll

enter the museum through a replicated serpent's mouth and darkened tunnel. As we go into the open air, sunlit gallery inside, we'll feel an archaeologist's exhilaration! Standing before you, you'll see the re-constructed, full-sized dazzling red Rosalila Temple. You can easily imagine a once vibrant and colorful Copán of ancient times. Other surrounding exhibits will further engage you in unravelling other Maya mysteries, concepts and customs.



Artist's rendition of Copán and its main acropolis during its hey-day.



Copán's famous ballcourt.



Rosalila Temple over the tombs.



Hieroglyphic Stairway with over 1,250 glyph blocks.



Copán's emblem glyph.



You'll get to see beautiful macaws as we enter the site.



The magnificent re-created Rosalila Temple in the museum.

Friday continued on next page





After the site, a sunset dinner and presentations

Synchronistically ... Ajmaq is the day when the great sages would share their teachings with the whole community and the community could speak with the Elders.



12.19.17.14.16
13 Ajmaq
Sinner-K'ib

Direction
West

Element
Earth

Key
Search for
expansion and
transmission

Growth
Forgiveness
and
personal
service

Colors
Gray, Black,
White

Nahwal
Owl, bee,
insects

Friday, October 29, cont.

The Importance of Copán:

Copán ranks among the most important Maya sites for many reasons, but foremost among these is its vast number of hieroglyphic texts. For its size (many other sites in the Maya Lowlands are physically larger), the amount of inscribed materials at Copán are truly astounding, suggesting that in some way the elite culture of this ancient kingdom was particularly interested in literate culture and whatever that entailed. It comes as little surprise, therefore, that Copán has long been a focus of intensive epigraphic investigation. The large number of texts at Copán, nearly all compared and studied, and these texts have played a significant role in the overall effort to break the Maya code. Recently, this great progress in deciphering Copán's inscriptions has not only revealed surprising facts about the local royal history, featuring the rituals and reigns of individual kings over a four-hundred year period, but it has also opened several doors on Maya culture as a whole.

We'll get you back to your hotel to freshen up, then, a wonderful evening begins.

We'll gather at the Hacienda San Lucas, where Flavia and her crew of Chorti Maya cooks will prepare a **wonderful dinner** for us. We'll eat as the sun goes down.

From there, we'll head down to the center of town where we will have **presentations** by our scholars at the Municipal Center. Flavia and David

are helping to have the event announced to the public and sponsored by the Honduran Ministry of Tourism, the Copán Chamber of Commerce and The Copán Association. It should be a wonderful evening indeed!

In Antigua, we will do our presentations in English, and in Copán in English with Spanish translation. Topics of interest include:

Garth Norman: "Izapa – Origin of the Maya's Sacred 260-Day Calendar and the Copán-Izapa 15 Degrees North Latitude Connection."

Janice Van Cleve: "Ox Witik: A new interpretation identifies exactly what and where it is and reveals how Eighteen Rabbit told us." In Antigua: "Yax Kuk Mo: An examination of the evidence and the surprising results."

Jim Reed: "Maya Creation Centers and the Sacrum Bone: Connecting the Human Body to the Nighttime Skies"



Copán is a photographer's paradise! Surprises around every corner.



Copán's first king hands over the scepter of power to the sixteenth!



The inner doorway of Structure 22 is a Maya cosmic vision in stone.



Ornately carved stela of king 18 Rabbit.



A delicious home-cooked meal by candle light.



Always freshly-made tortillas!



The presentations will be in the center of town.





Road trip! We journey from Copán back to La Antigua

No'j turns knowledge and experience into wisdom. It symbolizes the movement of Earth and Sky. It is the power of thoughts and ideas, the brain, development, and earthquakes.



Saturday, October 30

We have only the morning to enjoy the Copán valley. After a breakfast in your hotel, there's an opportunity for folks to try **zip-lining!** It's something new in Copán and I haven't tried it yet, but it appears that they have you come down the mountain through the tree tops and across the Copán River, landing in a field near the site core. For those not interested in zip-lining, we'll take you to the second **Copán museum** that is located in the town center.

We'll next head out of town, through the same El Florido border station and make our way back to La Antigua to the same hotel as previous. We'll have lunch along the way and a pit stop or two.

In the evening, we'll gather for our **farewell dinner** which will include only a presentation or two, acknowledgements and entertainment. Pablo Collado will still be with us, and hopefully, Q'anjob'al Maya author and spokesperson **Gaspár González** will join us. He was with us in June and what a nice experience it was. The sharing of his life story, his new book, and his writings and poetry were very moving. Tonight, we'll also be saying "until the next time" to our spiritual guides Antolín and Nicolasa. One final night in our beloved Guatemala.



View of the Copán Valley from the grounds of Hacienda San Lucas.



The central park of La Antigua just before sundown.



Q'anjob'al Maya spokesperson **Gaspár Pedro González** is a writer and artist, author of various novels including *La Otra Cara*, *Palabras Mayas* (poems), *El Retorno de los Mayas*, and his latest, *13 B'aktun*, in English, with translation by Robert Stiller.



12.19.17.14.17
1 No'j
Knowhow • Kab'an

Direction
North

Element
Air

Key
Knowledge
and
wisdom

Growth
Mental
transmission
and clarity

Colors
Dark Blue,
Light Blue

Nahwal
Coyote,
woodpecker

Jim Reed is
7 No'j



Blessed and fulfilled, we return to our homelands

Tijax is the best day for purifying the balance of our actions, whether positive or negative, making us atone and showing us a physical, mental, and/or spiritual map.



Sunday, October 31

Today is our travel home day. You can have breakfast in the hotel, then we will arrange various transports to the International airport in Guatemala City depending on your departure time.

If your travel plans include arriving a day earlier or later than our trip dates, contact Jim Reed – we will accommodate everyone as needed. Note: In previous years, there was always a \$40US airport exit tax, but this year you are only responsible for a \$3US security tax when leaving by air.

This mission adventure is an unprecedented opportunity for cultural interaction, learning and spiritual enhancement. We trust everyone will make it back to his/her point of origin, refreshed and renewed.

If you plan to join us for Mission Mimos-Copán 2010, contact Jim Reed to inquire about trip space availability. He will forward an official Maya Conservancy registration form. Fill out the Registration Form and mail it in with your \$500 deposit (per person) as soon as possible. Time is slipping by quickly!

For more info and to sign up, contact: Jim Reed at mayaman@bellsouth.net or **404-680-1644**



We say goodbye to the beautiful volcanoes.



Maya jade pendant from Neb'aj.



Ritual and the Popul Vuh.

12.19.17.14.18
2 Tijax
Knife Edge • Etz'nab'

Direction
South

Element
Water

Key
Double-edged
Knife

Growth
Warrior,
synchronicity,
navigation

Colors
White,
Red, Black

Nahwal
Toucan

