LANDS OF THE MAYA

ANCIENT RUINS AND VIBRANT JUNGLES OF MEXICO AND GUATEMALA

March 12 to 22, 2016
Traveling in the heart of Maya country, where towering pyramids and intricate stone carvings emerge from dense jungle foliage to bring ancient history to life, is a memorable adventure in and of itself. But visiting these sites in the company of a world-renowned expert on Mayan linguistics and hieroglyphs, Dr. Jim Fox, is a truly extraordinary experience. Dr. Fox has been leading Stanford travelers to Central America for some 40 years and his vast field experience and language proficiency afford very special opportunities to meet and interact with local people. Whether you are fascinated with manifestations of ancient genius or are curious about diverse peoples and ecology, we hope you join us on this unique journey.

BRET S. THOMPSON, '83, DIRECTOR, STANFORD TRAVEL/STUDY

Highlights

**CLIMB** the steep steps of the ancient temples at Palenque, one of only a few sites where one can still do this.

**EXPLORE** the vast complex of Tikal, a fabulous mix of tall pyramids and rain forest where howler monkeys and jaguars roam.

**LISTEN** to the symphonic cacophony of the region’s tropical wildlife from the comfort of a secluded jungle cabana.
DR. JIM FOX, an associate professor of anthropology at Stanford with a courtesy appointment in linguistics, is renowned for his work in Mayan linguistics and hieroglyphic decipherment and has numerous publications in this field to his credit. He has conducted extensive fieldwork in both Guatemala and Mexico, including a study of Ayapa Zoque, a nearly extinct language spoken by only a handful of people in the Mexican state of Tabasco. Jim has received several research grants for his work in Maya languages, among others, and was recently a keynote speaker at a conference on languages in Wroclaw, Poland. On this program he will discuss such topics as Maya writing and mythology, the Classic Maya collapse and life in a modern Maya village.

- Joined Stanford faculty, 1974
- Director, Center for Latin American Studies, 2001–2004
- BA, Germanic languages, Brigham Young University
- MA, international relations, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
- MA, linguistic anthropology; and PhD, linguistics, University of Chicago

"Jim Fox added a huge amount to the overall experience with his intimate knowledge of the people and country."

TERRY BECKLEY EASTMAN, '69, WILD NORWAY AND SVALBARD, 2015

OR BY PHONE: (650) 725-1093
SATURDAY, MARCH 12
DEPART U.S. / VILLAHERMOSA, MEXICO
Depart the U.S. and fly to Villahermosa. Arrive in the evening and transfer to our hotel where the rest of the night is free for relaxing. HOTEL QUINTA REAL.

SUNDAY, MARCH 13
DEPART U.S. / VILLAHERMOSA, MEXICO
This morning, visit the archaeological site of Comalcalco and explore the only Maya city built with bricks of baked clay instead of stone. After lunch and a chocolate tasting at a charming hacienda, return to Villahermosa for a visit to La Venta Park to view its amazing collection of sculptures from the ancient Olmec civilization, including four colossal stone heads. Later take a guided tour of the Villahermosa Archaeological Museum. Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening. HOTEL QUINTA REAL (B,L,D).

MONDAY, MARCH 14
VILLAHERMOSA / PALENQUE
Spend today in the magnificent Maya city of Palenque, set like a jewel in the emerald-hued foothills. The walls of the structures, built atop hills and crests to augment their height and grandeur, were adorned with carved portraits and hieroglyphics, giving historians a partial glimpse of the dynastic history of the city. This afternoon explore several of the main temples and palaces in this incredible archaeological complex and important UNESCO World Heritage site. CHAN-KAH RESORT AND VILLAGE (B,L,D).

TUESDAY, MARCH 15
PALENQUE
Return to the Palenque ruins this morning and visit some of the lesser-known and later-built temples where many artifacts relating to Maya religious beliefs, including masks and wall carvings of priests with jaguars, were discovered during multiple excavations. Later take a walk alongside the cascading Usumacinta River in Palenque National Park to the nearby Palenque museum. After viewing the museum’s highlights and having lunch at a local restaurant, enjoy an afternoon and evening at leisure. CHAN-KAH RESORT AND VILLAGE (B,L).

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16
PALENQUE / BONAMPAK / LACANJÁ
En route to the remote village of Lacanjá, stop at the ruins of Bonampak to see Mesoamerica’s best-preserved wall paintings. Continue to our forest lodge, run by a Lacandon family, and check in before lunch. After lunch enjoy a hike into the rain forest to a beautiful waterfall and take a swim in the Lacanjá River. Learn about the Lacandon people, one of the original surviving Maya groups who continue to uphold their ancient traditions, and observe an ancestral Maya cleansing ritual before we gather for dinner at the lodge. CAMPAMENTO TOP CHE (B,L,D).
THURSDAY, MARCH 17

**LACANJÁ / YAXCHILÁN / TIKAL, GUATEMALA**

Take a short boat ride on the Usumacinta River from the town of Frontera Corozal to the ruins of Yaxchilán. One of the most elegant examples of Late Classic Maya architecture, Yaxchilán is famed for its ornamental stone lintels carved with images of members of the royal dynasties. Return to Frontera Corozal for lunch before crossing the river into Guatemala. Drive to our delightful hotel overlooking Lago Petén Itzá and have dinner together upon arrival. **CAMINO REAL (B,L,D)**

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MARCH 18 & 19

**TIKAL**

Today discover Tikal, the power center of Maya rule during the Classic period. It thrived as a military and commercial center boasting roughly 100,000 inhabitants at its height in the 8th and 9th centuries. However, by the year 900, the city had been mysteriously abandoned. Spend two days exploring the incredible ruins at Tikal National Park. One of the largest Maya sites, Tikal is famous for its towering pyramids, as well as its impressive tropical flora and profuse fauna, including spider monkeys, howler monkeys, coatimundis, ocellated turkeys, toucans and jaguars. **CAMINO REAL (B,L—BOT H,D)**

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

**TIKAL / GUATEMALA CITY / ANTIGUA**

Take a morning flight to Guatemala City and, upon arrival, visit the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology that houses an exquisite collection of Maya artifacts. The archaeology section has objects from the Preclassic, Classic and Post-classic periods while the ethnology section shows linguistic Mayan groups, textiles and traditions. After lunch at a local restaurant, drive to Antigua, Guatemala’s most renowned colonial city, and check in to our hotel before dinner. **PORTA HOTEL ANTIGUA (B,L,D)**

MONDAY, MARCH 21

**ANTIGUA**

Spend the morning touring the majestic colonial city of Antigua, including the baroque cathedral, 18th-century convent of the Capuchinas, and bustling city market full of fruits, vegetables and brightly colored textiles. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure for independent explorations or shopping before gathering this evening for a memorable farewell dinner. **PORTA HOTEL ANTIGUA (B,D)**

TUESDAY, MARCH 22

**ANTIGUA / GUATEMALA CITY / U.S.**

Following breakfast, transfer together to the Guatemala City airport for return flights to the U.S. **(B)**
Trip Information

DATES
March 12 to 22, 2016 (11 days)

SIZE
26 participants (single accommodations limited—please call for availability)

COST*
$7,595 per person, double occupancy
$8,595 per person, single occupancy
*Association nonmembers add $300 per person

INCLUDED
10 nights of hotel accommodations  ▪ 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches and 6 dinners  ▪ Gratuities to guides, drivers and porters for all group activities
 ▪ All tours and excursions as described in the itinerary  ▪ Group transfer and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days  ▪ Flight from Tikal to Guatemala City  ▪ Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance  ▪ Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information ▪ Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

NOT INCLUDED
International and U.S. domestic airfare  ▪ Passport and visa fees  ▪ Immunization costs  ▪ Meals and beverages other than those specified as included  ▪ Independent and private transfers  ▪ Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance  ▪ Excess-baggage charges  ▪ Personal items such as internet access, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

AIR ARRANGEMENTS
International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the program cost. Round-trip, economy-class airfare on United Airlines from San Francisco to Villahermosa, Mexico, and return from Guatemala City, Guatemala, is approximately $950 as of September 2015 and is subject to change without notice. Information on recommended flight itineraries will be sent to confirmed participants.

WHAT TO EXPECT
We consider this program to be moderately strenuous and at times physically demanding and busy. Daily excursions involve one to three miles of walking, much of which takes place at ancient sites where paths can be rocky and uneven. Some of the sites that are located deep in tropical forests necessitate a walk of up to a mile to reach the sites’ entrances. Guided tours of archaeological sites and museums may require climbing up and down flights of stairs, which may not have handrails, and/or standing for long periods of time. Our journey sometimes requires early-morning starts as well as extended motorcoach travel. Due to unpaved roads in a few places, travel may be slow at times, with the longest drives being up to four hours (including rest stops) on winding or bumpy roads. Hotels and lodges are chosen for their proximity to the places we visit on our program and are best-available. Accommodations range from four-star hotels to basic, yet clean and comfortable, lodges. To participate fully in this adventure, one should be physically fit, active and in good health. We welcome travelers 12 years of age and older on this program.
Deposit & Final Payment
A $1,000-per-person deposit is required to hold your space. Sign up online at alumni.stanford.edu/trip?maya2016 or call the Travel/Study office at (650) 725-1093. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

Cancellations & Refunds
Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional trip-cancellation and baggage insurance. Information offering such insurance will be provided to travelers with their welcome materials. The product offered includes special benefits if you purchase your policy within 14 days of written confirmation of your participation on the trip.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $300 more than the members’ price. Families and trip companions may travel on one membership. For more information or to purchase a membership, visit alumni.stanford/goto/membership or call (650) 725-0692.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time that passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in September 2015 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges.
"I feel as if we were thoroughly exposed to the ancient Maya civilization. It doesn’t seem so mysterious and other-worldly as it did before."

Penelope Creasey Greenberg, ’65, Lands of the Ancient Maya, 2010

Quilt Pieces, Antigua Market

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