

Semana Santa
in
Antigua

April 8 – 14, 2009

Semana Santa in Antigua

<p>Holy Wednesday <i>Miércoles Santo</i> Guatemala City</p> <p>Colonial Antigua</p> <p>La Merced Church</p> <p>Semana Santa Presentation Dinner</p>	<p>4/8</p> <p>5 pm</p> <p>7:30</p>	<p>Fly to Guatemala City, viewing a remarkable city built on plateaus. John and Anita will personally greet you at the airport. You will then be transported back in time to the Spanish colonial city of Antigua you will be welcomed at the beautiful Palacio de Doña Leonor, former site of the home of daughter of Pedro Alvarado, Cortez' right hand man who he sent to conquer Guatemala for the King of Spain in 1524. The Palace was built sometime in the late 1540's and purchased by the present owners five years ago. They have created one of the most exquisite boutique hotels in Antigua; an elegant mansion tastefully decorated to invoke 17th century luxury, and just a few doors away from the main plaza.</p> <p>Arrive at La Merced Church for a private tour including the Church and Mercedarian Monastery, a viewing of the Children's float, the Brotherhood's vault (where a collection of robes and jewelry from processions of years past are sequestered).</p> <p>A presentation: "Jesus de La Merced - 334 años de Fe y Devocion" (Jesus of La Merced – 334 years of Faith and Devotion) Easter rites, traditions and ceremonies which have been practiced by the Brotherhood of Jesus of Nazareth and Most Virgin Mary since 1675 to celebrate the passion and death of Christ. On private display will be tunics of Jesus, and the Virgin Mary, antique crowns of Jesus, antique poniard of the Virgin Mary, and other ceremonial objects and jewels (as deemed appropriate by the President of the brotherhood)</p> <p>Dinner tonight at a very special restaurant including a special Semana Santa (Holy Week) presentation and slide show by Elizabeth Bell, an American who grew up in and has authored many books on Antigua and its past. (D)</p>
<p>Maundy Thursday <i>Jueves Santo</i> Breakfast Depart for San Francisco Church and the Jesús Nazareno del Perdón Procesión</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p>Lost Jade mines of the Maya</p> <p>Dinner</p>	<p>4/9</p> <p>7 am 10 am</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>5 pm</p>	<p>Depart on foot to the Church of San Francisco, a Monastery of the Franciscan Order. where we will be special guests for a private talk by one of the members of the Hermandad de Jesus de las Angustias de San Francisco. We have private seating at the front of the church where the procession begins. It is an incredibly moving experience to see the enormous floats with the 17th century Jesús Nazareno del Perdón taking 60 men (cucuruchos) to lift and maneuver out of the church, followed by the Virgen de Dolores carried by over 40 women. We will also be able to view the tomb of recently canonized Saint Hermano Pedro de San José de Bethancourt, a Franciscan friar of the late 17th century, known for his great charity and love for the poor.</p> <p>Meet up for lunch on a roof top overlooking the Church of San Francisco. The rest of the afternoon is free.</p> <p>We will visit the Jade Factory/Museum to learn of the rediscovery of the ancient Maya Jade mines. Depart Church for a reception in a private home where you will view a most incredible private colonial art collection. (B,L,D)</p>

Good Friday <i>Viernes Santo</i> Coffee / Juice Departure	4/10 5 am	We will have coffee and juice before departing by foot for La Merced Church where you will witness the largest and most solemn of the Lent and Holy Week processions. First we will walk along the route the procession will take in order to view some of the most colorful carpets of the entire week, before they are walked on. Then we will skirt the procession locating the best places to view and photograph this magnificent event.
Breakfast	9:00	Return to the Palacio for breakfast and a rest. There will be time to explore the cobblestone calles, shops, and Bougainvillea draped ruins of Antigua.
Lunch	Open	Lunch on your own.
Procession	TBA	In the late afternoon we may meet to walk a few blocks to view the solemn procession of the Senor Sepultado and Virgen de La Soledad leaving from the Escuela de Cristo Church. The carriers for this procession dress in black robes and carry lanterns to light the way, for soon it will be dark.
Dinner	Open	Dinner on your own tonight. (B)
Saturday <i>Sábado de Gloria</i>	4/11	Today we will explore the Capuchin ruins, the most intact and least understood ruins of this Colonial city. Options: Guided tour of the main Cathedral and the Colonial Art Museum. In the afternoon there will be free time again for shopping on your own. This colonial jewel of a city is filled with ruins covered in colorful bougainvillea and cobblestone streets full of quaint shops. For those still wanting to see more processions there is a Women's procession of Senor Sepultado and the Virgen de La Soledad at the Escuela de Christo Church. (B)
Breakfast	7-9	
Ruins	9:00	
Lunch	Open	
Dinner	Open	
Sunday <i>Domingo de Resurrección</i>	4/12	Today you are on your own to explore Antigua and all it has to offer. We will provide guidance, information and options if you'd like.
Breakfast	7-9	A sumptuous breakfast at your leisure at the beautiful Palacio de Dona Leonor (B)
Monday	4/13	Again, today you are on your own to explore Antigua and all it has to offer. We will provide guidance, information and options if you'd like.
Breakfast	7-9	A sumptuous breakfast at your leisure at the beautiful Palacio de Dona Leonor (B)
Tuesday	4/14	Say adios to Antigua as today everybody departs for home.
Breakfast	7:00	(B)
Departures		

• B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Included in your Semana Santa Experience with Explore Guatemala:

7 days, 6 nights at a unique and luxury boutique hotel ▪ meals per itinerary including tips ▪ hotel baggage handling and driver gratuities ▪ private transportation ▪ all special and private Semana Santa venues/entrance fees per itinerary

NOT Included:

▪ Airport baggage handling tips (we recommend 5 Qs per bag) ▪ Guatemalan Airport Security Tax (Q20.00) or any additional security or airport tax ▪ Alcohol or personal room charges ▪ meals not included in itinerary