

# NATURE

The Lungs of Mexico Chiapas, México



Chiapas of Heart

## ◆ LAGUNAS DE MONTEBELLO NATIONAL PARK

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It is one of the most beautiful places of the country because of its Karst nature aquatic ecosystems, either superficial or underground, which form part of thick pine and holm-oak woods and of mixed forest with the remarkable presence of bromeliads and orchids. Landslides and the erosion of the limestones are the factors that allow these former cenotes to become this lake system of wonderful colors.

*It is located at 55 Km from Comitán de Domínguez*

## ◆ AGUA AZUL CASCADES

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The Agua Azul River goes down over the step-like formations within its limestone bed creating impressive cascades that form natural pools contained by calcareous dams (also called "gours" in geology). The adventurous people can go with a local guide's help to other cascades that are even more impressive as the riverbed continues its course until it falls into the Tulijá River. In this point, there is one of the most beautiful water screens and one of the most magnificent natural spectacles that Mexico can offer.

*It is located at 64 Km from the city of Palenque.*

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## ◆ TACANÁ VOLCANO BIOSPHERE RESERVE

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The Tacaná or "The House of Fire" is a 4,093-meter-high active volcano being the highest peak of Chiapas and of Southern Mexico. This place has different kinds of ecosystems: high jungle, pine woodland with beautiful tree ferns, fog forest and zacatonal; all of them leading to the only high páramo in Chiapas. Speaking about its geographical structure, this is the perfect place for those who are into mountain climbing, though it is recommended to climb with a local guide.

*The tour starts in Unión Juárez, at 42 km from Tapachula.*

## ◆ LAS NUBES CASCADES

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The beautiful and impressive cascades of turquoise blue color are formed by the Santo Domingo River. Cascadas Verdes, Sendero Selva, Loma Bonita and El Mirador are some of the attractions that impress all visitors when going in this exciting tour around the place. Also, this site holds a tourism center.

*It is located at 129 Km from Comitán de Domínguez.*

## ◆ MISOL-HA FALLS

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This beautiful waterfall, famous by the harmony between water and jungle, is around 25 meters high. When falling, it creates a wide pool in which it is possible to practice with caution swimming. Besides, the beauty of this place has been used as the location for several films.

*It is located at 19 Km from the city of Palenque.*

## ◆ CHUCUMALTIK CENOTE

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For those who are into altitude diving, Chucumaltik is the ideal place. Having 200 meters in diameter and almost 70 meters depth, this cenote contains crystalline water that incredibly permits to see up to 40 meters. Moreover, it holds petrified trees, sulfur chimneys, an evocative altar to Virgen de los Dolores, a quartz deposit and caves in its depths.

*It is located at 223 Km from Comitán de Domínguez*

## ◆ ARCO DEL TIEMPO

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It is one of the highest natural bridges in the world having 158 meters high, 255 meters large and 35 meters wide. This geomorphologic formation of more than 80 million years joins to other beautiful landscapes when touring La Venta River, which is inside of a gorgeous canyon. The access to this place is ideal for practicing hiking and feeling the adventure. To arrive at this place, it exists two tourism centers: Adolfo López Mateos and Lázaro Cárdenas.

*These centers are located approximately at 65 Km from Cintalapa de Figueroa, of which first 47 Km are paved. To arrive at Arco del Tiempo, it has to be covered between 23 to 30 Km, which means to walk between 3 to 4 hours. Also, there are places where some rappelling techniques are used to descend to the river.*

## ◆ LA ENCRUCIJADA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

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On the Pacific Ocean shore, La Encrucijada Biosphere Reserve protects a series of estuaries that are part of the migratory route of waterbirds coming from North America. This place has mangroves of 35 meters in height, which are considered the highest on the American Pacific coast.

*La Encrucijada is located in Acapetahua, which is at 76 Km from the city of Tapachula de Córdova y Ordóñez; 18 Km further, it is found Las Garzas pier in which a boat takes visitors to the Reserve.*



Chiapas provides an extensive ecological and cultural diversity. It is one of the Mexican states with a great variety and richness of natural resources. It has more than 40 Natural Protected Areas, of which extension is nearly the fifth part of the state. Chiapas ranks as 2nd in Mexico on biodiversity, having 1 of every 3 amphibian species, 1 of every 4 reptile species, 3 of every 4 birds, 1 of every 2 mammals and 1 of every 3 flora species that exists within the country. Some reserves to mention are Montes Azules, the heart of the Lacandon Jungle, El Triunfo, in the Sierra Madre, shelter of the log forest and of the mystical quetzal, El Ocote, at the Zoque region; including the great Cañón la Venta, La Encrucijada, on the coast, area of estuaries and mangroves; and La Sepultura, woods and jungles in the Sierra Madre. Speaking of national parks, Lagunas de Montebello, Cañón del Sumidero and Palenque are some of the most visited places.



 Sector Chiapas

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