

Search by destination or hotel name

1/26/2019



1/30/2019



1 room, 2 guests



Search

MÉRIDA MEXICO

9 Reasons This Colonial Mexican Town Should Be on Your Bucket List

Jan 16, 2019 by Kristin Hanes

[f Share \(18\)](#) [p Pin \(5\)](#) [t Tweet](#) [e Email](#)

Merida, Mexico, Adam Jones/Flickr

The colonial town of [Merida](#) is a far cry from the tourist-clogged [beaches of Cancun](#). There are no midday body shots, reveling spring breakers, or sprawling mega-resorts here. But Merida has a spirit all of its own. For one, it's the cultural heart of the [Yucatan Peninsula](#), built over 500 years ago on top of a thriving Mayan civilization called Tho. It has been home to sisal barons, the French upper crust, and Mayans struggling to find their way following the arrival of the Europeans. Now, it's one of the safest cities in Mexico, and was even voted the [Cultural Capital of the Americas](#), thanks to its diverse panoply of art, architecture, and food. Sure, it's four hours west of the powdery beaches in raucous Cancun, but it's worth a spot on your Mexico bucket list. Here are nine reasons you should consider spending a few days in Merida on your next trip south of the border.

7. The historic haciendas.



Chable Resort & Spa/Kristin Hanes

In the 18th century, the sisal trade was booming in Merida. Sisal was used to create those popular Panama hats, and grew from a plant called the henequen. Wealthy Spaniards built sprawling haciendas in the state of Yucatan where they could grow henequen and export sisal. Many of these haciendas have been revitalized and turned into hotels that are worth staying in or at least stopping by for a tour and bite to eat. Check out [Hacienda Santa Cruz](#), the magnificently restored [Chable Resort & Spa](#), or the bright-pink [Rosas & Xocolate Boutique Hotel & Spa](#).