

## *Mexico Music Educational Travel*

### **MERIDA**

Merida means the "white city". According to Yucatan historians, Merida was founded by the Spaniard Rancisco de Montejo, on January 6, 1542. Before the Spaniards arrived, Merida had been a large Mayan city known as T'ho. Once conquered, the city of T'ho was dismantled and the stones of the pyramids were used as the foundation for the Cathedral of San Ildelfonso (1556-1599). This is the oldest Catholic Cathedral on the American Continent.

#### **PERFORMANCE VENUES**

**For musical and dance groups in and around Merida and the province of the Yucatan.**

##### **Indoor Performances:**

The Cathedral of San Ildelfonso, is located at the cities central square. This is the oldest Catholic Church on Continental America. The acoustics of the church are outstanding. This is a wonderful performance venue for choral groups. The Merida Grand Opera Hall (Peoncentreras) is a wonderful performance venue for choral, orchestras, concert bands, dance and drama groups. The concert hall seats about 1,500 people and is known as the cities "Classical Concert Hall". The Olympia Theater Concert hall of the University of the Yucatan is a modern concert hall seating about 700 persons. It is located across the street from the Merida Grand Opera Hall. Many different performance groups perform in this modern concert hall. This hall is excellent for musical, dance and drama groups. The Teatro de Media (A new art deco theater opened in 1999) is located near the Central Plaza of Merida the Theater has modern electronic enhancement capabilities and is excellent for dance and drama groups because of its wide and deep stage. Another theater is the Daniel Ayala Theater is good for different musical, dance and drama productions. In addition there are performance possibilities (depending upon the time of the year) at different public and private schools as well as several dance schools.

##### **Outdoor Performances:**

Within the city of Merida there are several outstanding outdoor stages. The first is located in Merida's "Central Square". Every Sunday morning the central square is host to the regions local craftsmen. The craftsmen set up their small booths around the edge of the square. In the middle is a large outdoor stage. Each Sunday the city invites local musicians and dancers to perform for shoppers visiting the area. This is one of the cities best outdoor venues because there is always a large and appreciative audience, especially foreign tourists who come in from Cancun to shop at this Sunday market.

The city hosts musical groups every Friday and Saturday evening at the "Park of the America's". This is a very popular venue for the people of Merida. The city features "special music or dance groups. Musical and dance groups like to perform on this stage because the audiences are always warm and friendly.

**Performance venues outside of Merida:**

The International Fine Arts Institute in cooperation with the Federal Department of Culture can also organize performances in some of the outlying cities on the Yucatan.

Two such cities are Tizimin located about 80 miles from Merida. The city is rather isolated but the population of the area is over 40,000 people. They have a very nice outdoor stage and the people appreciate foreign musical/and dance groups.

Another city located half way to Cancun is the city or town of Valladolid. The city has a nice concert hall and can provide outdoor performances. The city is one of the oldest in Mexico and a wonderful place to shop and stroll along the quite streets surrounding the main shopping plaza.

**Meet the Mexican People:**

You will have an opportunity to meet the real people of Mexico. Merida is the capital of the Yucatan peninsula, its people are hard working, quite and shy, but love to share their culture and art with outsiders. Merida is also known for its love of music, drama and art. Foreign musical groups highly appreciated.

Shopping in Merida is an exciting aspect of any journey to this wonderful Spanish colonial city. Bargains abound in clothing, leather, silver, pottery, paintings, and many other folk crafts.

***PERFORMANCE TOURS TO MERIDA***  
**8 nights 9 days**

Tour cost inclusions:

Accommodation, double, or quads; Breakfast and dinners; All ground transportation; Guided City Tour; Shopping tour of the City Market; Shopping tour of the Carrefour Shopping Mall (French owned); Day trip to Uxmal; Trip to Chichen Itza; Tour of Palacio Canton (Museum of Anthropology); Day trip to Progreso and the beach resort near D'zibilchaltun; Performances in several of the major concert halls in Merida, possible school exchange, open square performances in the evening and traveling to several cities in the Province of the Yucatan; Return airfares from Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, airport departure tax, customs fees and travel insurance.