

The Mayan Ruins of Chichin-Itza

Written by

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This morning we had to get on a tour bus at 7:25 AM to go to Chichen-Itza, about 2 ½ hours southwest of here. Since we left to come to Mexico, we have been getting up early so by the time we leave here our internal clocks will be really messed up. The weather here is still not great; today it stayed cloudy all day and if the temperature reached the predicted 23C, I'd be surprised. It was perfect weather though for the first of our Mayan Ruins excursions because we have heard they are tortuous on hot, sunny days.

The drive to Chichen-Itza was an adventure all on it's own with our large, comfortable coach manoeuvring roads that at times were barely wide enough for a small car. As we neared the Yucatán State where Chichen-Itza is located we drove through many small villages where the modern day Mayan people reside. They live in thatch-roofed cabanas with stone walls and hammocks for beds. These people are poor, dirt poor, but they are hard working, productive and very friendly, making money selling handmade crafts for very little money.

The stunning ruins are a national park and undergoing some major restorations which started officially in 1974 but are still very evident today. There are Mayan craftspeople selling their wares within the park which is supposed to be illegal but apparently, thankfully, un-enforced. Though our guide did his best to explain the history of the Mayan culture, he was difficult to understand however I did learn this: They were extremely advanced in both mathematics and astronomy and the structures are built with precision in relation to the positioning of the sun, the moon and the planets. The Mayan's believed that they needed to perform human sacrifices to keep the gods happy and most of their "gifts" were between the ages of 3 to 25 (according to skeletons discovered at the temples in recent years). There is much more but I will cover it tomorrow.

We got back to the resort twelve hours after we left, hungry and too tired to write this and post it, hence it is a day late.