

Casa Preciosa

General Info

Chuburna itself is very sleepy little town but we have miles of beautiful white sand beaches, many wonderful birds and iguanas and the local people are wonderful and very friendly. There are many local seafood restaurants that are open mid-day for meals; fried fish (pescado frito) and ceviche are the local specialties. There is a grocery store just off the main square where you can buy fresh fruit, bread and general groceries. There are also several local tortillarias where you can buy corn tortillas, fresh, fresh, fresh! The ice cream truck also comes by on the weekend and holidays and plays a little song. He has some wonderful coconut ice cream!

You can catch a 'Combi'(van) in the main town square that will take you to Chelem for 8 pesos or into Progreso for 11 pesos. **Chelem** is a similar but slightly larger fishing village. It has a great place to buy fresh fish in the morning, a liquoria, a bakery and internet place. Chelem also has a larger selection of restaurants with a wider variation of food.

Progreso is our main port city and a must visit on your trip. The Bodega Aurrera is the main full service grocery store for the beach area and will have most things you will need. The Malecon (walkway along the beach) is active with people and there are many restaurants and shops. Cruise ship days are especially fun (Tuesday, Thursday and some weekends) when there is often additional markets, beach vendors, inexpensive massages, bike and scooter rentals and it's just a really fun time. From Progreso you can also catch a large air-conditioned AutoProgreso bus for 29 pesos return to Merida for a day in the Big City!

Merida is an amazing city! There is everything you can imagine in Merida. There are full service grocery stores, malls and many chain stores and restaurants you would find in North America. The city centre of Merida called "Centro" has several wonderful markets. There is one called Lucas de Galvez that is open 7 days a week and frequented by the local people. It sells everything you can think of from clothes and shoes to food products and housewares. There is also a lovely market in the town square on Sundays that sells local crafts and jewellery and generally has music and local entertainment. Paseo Montejo is also a wonderful street close by the town square and has many museums, restaurants, lounges and night clubs and is also closed on Sundays to promote walking and cycling in the area. Be sure to take a horse and buggy ride along the Paseo De Montejo(around 300 pesos)!

Izamal:A short drive east of Merida is the picturesque city of Izamal. Known as the "Yellow City," Izamal is a lovely place to spend hours strolling the streets and finding the ancient Mayan ruins which are interspersed all throughout town. Izamal may be one of the best day trips from Merida for photographers. You'll love snapping photos of all the unique and bright yellow architecture. The most notable building in Izamal is the monastery: Convento de San Antonio de Padua (free, \$5 pesos to enter the museum 10am-1pm and 3pm-6pm Monday to Saturday, 9am-5pm on Sundays). Spaniards came here in the 14th century and destroyed a Mayan temple that was once on this site. They then used the stones of the temple to build the monastery! If you look, you're still able to see carving designs from the former Mayan temple within the church stones. Also be sure to visit the Mayan pyramid of Kinich-Kakmo. It's free (8am-5pm) and well worth trekking up the steep steps for the best panoramic view of Izamal! A good way to see all of Izamal is from a horse-drawn carriage. \$200 pesos will get you an hour tour of the yellow city.

Celestun: The Special Biosphere Reserve: cardinals, orioles, motmots, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, flycatchers, kingfishers, cormorants, magnificent frigate birds, herons, egrets, white ibises, wood storks, ospreys, hawks, vultures, sandpipers, roadrunners, owls, pelicans, etc. Of course, the most sought after is the Pink Flamingo. The Flamingo is one of the most graceful and spectacular birds, but also one that depends on a fragile ecosystem and Celestun the most amazing place to see them. Boat tours are the available at the entrance to the town (best price) or from the main beach.

