MEXICO’S COPPER CANYON
October 11, 2016 - 15 Days

Fares Per Person:
$4695 double/twin
$5460 single
$4530 triple

— Tour exempt from GST.
— Early Bookers: $200 discount on first 8 seats; $100 on next 4
— Experience Points: Earn 97 points from this tour.
  Redeem 97 points if you book by August 2.

* HIGHLIGHTS *
“Pueblo Magico” town of Alamos
El Fuerte
Chihuahua Al Pacifico Railroad (1st class train)
Creel
Hotel Divisadero (on Copper Canyon Rim)
Cerocahui Village
Urique Canyon
Barranca Del Cobre
Inn at Mazatlan Oceanfront Resort

Kamloops > 250-374-0831
Kelowna > 250-762-3435
www.wellsgraytours.com
Penticton > 250-493-1255
Vernon > 250-545-9197
Toll Free > 800-667-9552
In the last ten years, you have probably seen numerous stories in the media about the dangers of travelling in Mexico. The Mexican government has made heroic efforts to counteract this bad press and salvage their vital tourism industry by showing that Mexico is as safe to travel in as many foreign countries. Tourism has rebounded, but many people still pay attention to what they see on TV and in newspapers.

Mexico still has some dangerous places to visit, but so do many countries including Canada and the USA. This tour was redesigned in 2014 from previous Copper Canyon tours to avoid Chihuahua and Juarez, and the 2016 itinerary also stays west of the Sierra Madre where travel is much safer. This change allowed the addition of the colonial village of Alamos.

The scenery in Copper Canyon and Urique Canyon is awesome, the train ride is among the world’s most spectacular, and the newly-opened aerial tram down into Copper Canyon is a thrilling experience. Come and enjoy this amazing region of Mexico!

Tour Director & Guide: A Wells Gray tour director is with you throughout the tour. A bilingual Mexican guide accompanies you from Tucson to Mazatlan. The Mexican guide provides commentary about scenery and culture and assists with translation at the various stops.

Accommodation: The Inn at Mazatlan is the only first-class hotel on the tour. Other hotels are rated as 3 or 4 stars. Many are in unique or historic buildings. Don’t expect fancy hotels in the Copper Canyon area as this is still a remote tourist area. Hotels named in the itinerary could change, but substitute accommodation will be of similar quality.

Airline baggage fees are not included due to difficulties of prepayment to Alaska Airlines.

Documentation: A passport is required for this tour. A tourist card is also required for Canadian citizens visiting Mexico. It is issued on arrival and must be kept throughout your visit and surrendered when you leave Mexico at Mazatlan Airport.

Tour 25: This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning capacity of this tour is limited to 25 participants, a more intimate travel experience.

Activity Level: Moderate activity including short distances to walk, steps and uneven walkways, sidewalks and trails. Cobblestone streets are common in historic towns. A few hotels have no elevator and there are stairs to access your room. Walking tours are arranged in some historic towns where coach transportation is impossible. Seeing everything mentioned in this itinerary requires active participation. There can be longer walks in the airports while travelling to Tucson and home from Mazatlan; request a cart or wheelchair in advance if this could be an issue for you. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, Mexican guide, and driver have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

Important Tour Information will be available at final payment and contains suggestions about clothing, weather, food & drink, tipping, extra money needed and Mexican exchange.

Includes
- Coach transportation to/from Seattle Airport
- 14 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
- Flight on Alaska Airlines from Seattle to Tucson
- Air transport taxes and security fees
- Coach transportation in Mexico for 6 days
- Tour of Alamos colonial town
- Walking tour of historic El Fuerte
- First class ticket on Chihuahua al Pacifico Railroad from El Fuerte to Creel and return
- Guided walk of Tarahumara Indian land and Cusarare Falls
- Teleferico Aerial Tram into Copper Canyon
- Walking tour along rim of Copper Canyon
- Sightseeing tour to Cerro el Gallego Lookout
- Half-day sightseeing tour of Mazatlan
- Malecon cliff divers
- Mazatlan Cathedral
- Casa Machado Museum and Aquarium
- Transfer from Mazatlan hotel to airport
- Flight from Mazatlan to Seattle
- Wells Gray tour director throughout tour
- Bilingual Mexican guide from Tucson to Mazatlan
- Gratuities for Mexican guide and drivers
- Luggage handling at hotels
- 36 meals: 14 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 11 dinners

Tour Notes

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Tuesday, October 11: Meals: L
We travel via the Coquihalla Highway, cross the border and follow I-5 south to Seattle. We stay overnight at the Quality Inn in Renton near the Seattle airport.

Wednesday, October 12: Meals: B,D
We fly from Seattle on Alaska Airlines non-stop to Tucson, arriving at 1 pm. Our overnight accommodation is at the Desert Diamond Hotel & Casino near the airport.

Thursday, October 13: Meals: B,L,D
A Mexican bilingual guide and a coach meet us this morning. Welcome to Mexico! We cross the Mexican border at Nogales and drive south on Interstate 15 to Hermosillo. We stay overnight at Hotel Colonial.

Friday, October 14: Meals: B,L,D
We continue along the coastal freeway through the vast agricultural lands of Sonora State, known for tomatoes, potatoes, corn, sugar cane and wheat. At Navojoa, we take a side road into the mountains to reach Alamos. Founded in the late 17th century following discoveries of silver in the region, it was named by the conquistador Coronado and became the capital of the surrounding region. Alamos is Mexico’s northernmost ‘Silver City’ but fortunately it has not succumbed to large-scale commercialism and has retained the charm of earlier times. Alamos was named a “Pueblo Magico” in 2005, a designation given by the Tourism Ministry to towns that offer a ‘magical’ experience by reason of their natural beauty, cultural riches and historical relevance. We stay for tonight at Casa de Los Tesoros, a 200-year old hotel in the centre of town.

Saturday, October 15: Meals: B,D
The morning is leisure time in Alamos. During the afternoon, it is a short drive to quaint El Fuerte near the base of the Sierra Madre. We stay overnight at Hotel La Choza, an enchanting hotel built around a plant-filled courtyard and pool. El Fuerte was founded by the Spaniards in 1564 and is full of historic buildings. A walking tour includes the picturesque square bounded by the cathedral and a 200-year old hacienda, now the city hall.

Sunday, October 16: Meals: B,L,D
We board the Chihuahua Al Pacifico Railroad and thrill to the engineering wonders of the track during our ride in the first class “Ferromex” coach. Planning and construction of this amazing railroad took 90 years and it opened to traffic between Los Mochis and Chihuahua in 1961. Today’s journey from El Fuerte to Creel takes eight hours. The train first climbs steadily along the canyon of the Rio Fuerte. Once into the Sierra Madre, it corkscrews higher and higher, hugging steep mountainsides and squeezing through narrow gorges. At the Temoris switchbacks, three levels of track are visible at the same time. In all, there are 86 tunnels ranging up to a kilometre long and 39 bridges of which the highest is 100 metres. Divisadero station is perched right on the rim of Copper Canyon (Barranca del Cobre) and the train makes a short stop so you can admire the spectacular view with sheer cliffs dropping over 2,000 metres to the river. Five times larger than the Grand Canyon and 1 1/2 times deeper, Copper Canyon slices into the Sierra Madre to form a wilderness that has never been penetrated by roads. The native people in the canyon are the shy and primitive Tarahumara Indians who inhabit caves along the canyon walls. Back on the train, the remaining journey to the lumber town of Creel (pronounced cree-EL) takes 1 1/2 hours, arriving about 4 pm. We stay two nights at the Best Western Hotel.

Monday, October 17: Meals: B,L
During a tour around the Creel area, we view a Tarahumara cave dwelling, visit the Jesuit Mission of San Ignacio and the Boarding School, and admire nature’s handiwork on the weird balancing rocks of Mushroom Valley. The Mission Store stocks English language books about the Tarahumaras and Copper Canyon. A walk to 30-metre high Cusarare Falls is offered as well.

Tuesday, October 18: Meals: B,L,D
In late morning, we board the train for the short ride back to Divisadero. We stay two nights at the Hotel Divisadero which literally perches on the edge of the cliffs. This afternoon, we enjoy a walk along the rim to several viewpoints. We may be able to view a demonstration foot race by the Tarahumaras who are renowned for their speed and endurance. Don’t miss the amazing bargains on Tarahumara crafts. A video show about the Indians and the geology of Copper Canyon is offered this afternoon.

Wednesday, October 19: Meals: B,L,D
We ride the remarkable Teleferico Aerial Tram nearly 1,000 metres down into Copper Canyon. Built in 2010, the cablecar is sometimes 200 me-
tres above the ground and the 4.3 kilometre trip from upper to lower stations is one of the longest in the world with no supporting towers. In the afternoon, you can thrill to the hanging bridge and the glass-bottom floor, or buy an exciting ride on the zip lines (one is over 2 km long).

**Thursday, October 20:**  
**Meals: B,L,D**  
The morning is free time to return to favourite viewpoints or experience some more thrills of Copper Canyon. At 1 pm, we board the train for a 1½-hour trip to Bahuichivo, then we drive a few miles to the Hotel Misión in the quaint mountain village of Cerocahui. A Jesuit mission was established here in the late 17th century.

**Friday, October 21:**  
**Meals: B,L,D**  
We drive to the Cerro el Gallego Lookout, one of Mexico’s most awesome viewpoints. From an elevation of nearly 2,300 metres, we look down into the Urique Canyon, deepest of the complex of gorges comprising Copper Canyon. Stops are also made at an old Tarahumara church, a rancho and the Virgencita Spring. After we get on the train at 2:30, it is a four-hour trip out of the canyons and into the foothills of the Sierra Madre. We stay overnight again at Hotel la Choza in El Fuerte.

**Saturday, October 22:**  
**Meals: B,L,D**  
We travel south along the coastal plain, nicknamed the “Bread Basket of Mexico” because of the fertile farmlands growing corn, wheat, sorghum, beans, oats, chile peppers, tomatoes and many other crops. We cross the Tropic of Cancer and pass through cities such as Los Mochis and Culiacan during the 400-kilometre drive to Mazatlan. We stay two nights at the Inn at Mazatlan Resort. This is one of the finest hotels in Mazatlan, located in the El Cid Marina area, about 10 minutes taxi to downtown. The resort is right beside the ocean with a sandy beach in front.

**Sunday, October 23:**  
**Meals: B,L,D**  
A sightseeing tour around Mazatlan includes the Cathedral, Aquarium, El Faro Lighthouse, Shrimp House, Casa Machado Museum, and the daring cliff divers at Malecon. The afternoon is free time to enjoy our luxurious hotel and the beach. A farewell dinner is a chance to reminisce with fellow travellers about our memorable experiences in Copper Canyon.

**Monday, October 24:**  
**Meals: B**  
The morning is at leisure and we leave the resort about 1 pm for the airport. We fly on Alaska Airlines to Los Angeles, then continue to Seattle. A Canadian coach meets us at the airport and we stay overnight at the Quality Inn Renton.

**Tuesday, October 25:**  
**Meals: B**  
There are shopping stops at Bellis Fair Mall in Bellingham and the Duty-Free Store, then we cross the border and travel home via the Coquihalla.

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**Tour Policies**

**Payments:** A deposit of $500 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due August 2, 2016.

**Discounts:** Early bookers receive $200 discount on first 8 seats and $100 on next 4 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after August 2.

**Cancellation Policy:** Up to July 5, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of $50 per person. From July 6 to August 2, the cancellation charge is $250 per person. From August 3 to August 23, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From August 24 to September 8, the cancellation charge is 70% of the tour fare. After September 8, there is no refund.

**Fare Changes:** Changes to taxes or currency exchange rates and surcharges from airlines and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure.

**Travel Insurance:** A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

**Photo Credit:** Roland Neave

**E-points:** This tour earns 97 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals $1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until August 2.

**Consumer Protection BC Licences:** Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924