



Discovering Our Planet Together



Kingdom of the Monarchs

Witness Mexico's Amazing Migration of Millions of Butterflies!



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Trip Details:

Days
6 Days / Dec–Mar

Price
From \$5295

Physical Requirements
Moderate/Difficult

Kingdom of the Monarchs

Witness Mexico's Amazing Migration of Millions of Butterflies!

One of the world's most astounding wildlife events occurs each year in the forested Central Highlands of Mexico, featuring the most delicate of creatures. As we enter a grove of oyamel fir trees on a remote mountaintop, the trunks and branches appear to be blanketed with rusty autumn leaves. A closer look reveals they're quivering. Then, as the sun emerges from behind a cloud to warm them, hundreds of thousands of monarch butterflies take to the sky—so many that we actually hear the beating of their wings, which glow translucent orange against the blue sky. Sometimes, the monarchs float down to alight on our hats and shoulders. On special photography departures, learn to capture inspiring butterfly images, from intricate close-ups to great clouds of airborne monarchs. Experience this moving phenomenon with expert interpretation from Mexico's premier naturalist guides.

Trip Highlights

On foot and horseback, enter the remote fir forests of Mexico's Central Highlands, where millions of monarchs roost in protected sanctuaries each winter

When the sun emerges, hear the hum of gossamer butterfly wings as tens of thousands of monarchs take flight, fluttering overhead in a cloud of orange

Explore traditional mountain villages, soak in healing mineral springs prized by Indigenous people, and witness the benefits of butterfly ecotourism for local communities



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Itinerary At A Glance

- Day 1**
Mexico City, Mexico
- Day 2**
Angangueo—El Rosario Sanctuary
- Day 3**
Angangueo—Chincua Sanctuary
- Day 4**
Angangueo—El Rosario Sanctuary / Jungapeo
- Day 5**
Jungapeo / Toluca / Mexico City
- Day 6**
Mexico City / Depart

Kingdom of the Monarchs Itinerary

Witness Mexico's Amazing Migration of Millions of Butterflies!

Day 1: Mexico City, Mexico

Our monarch butterfly tour begins in Mexico City, with a transfer from the airport to our downtown hotel in the upscale Polanco district. Gather for a welcome dinner with our Expedition Leader, followed by an orientation to the wonders that lie ahead. One of the world's most astounding natural events occurs each year in North America, featuring one of its most unlikely creatures: the delicate monarch butterfly. Every autumn, tens of millions of monarchs set flight on a remarkable 3,000-mile journey from the northeastern U.S. and Canada to their ancestral wintering grounds in the volcanic mountains of central Mexico. The location of their breeding grounds remained a mystery until 1977, and how an infant generation of butterflies finds it anew each year is still an enigma. Filled with anticipation, we look forward to tomorrow's journey into the mysterious kingdom of the monarchs.





Day 2: Angangueo—El Rosario Sanctuary

Leaving Mexico City, we drive into the Central Highlands past vistas of the snowcapped Nevado de Toluca volcano, bound for the small mountain town of Angangueo. Once a copper and silver mining town, today it thrives on butterfly tourism and local agriculture. The village is very picturesque, a tumble of pastel buildings set along narrow cobblestone streets that hug the steep mountain slopes. Enjoy a hearty lunch of homemade Mexican fare before making our first foray into the monarch kingdom at El Rosario Butterfly Sanctuary, one of several sanctuaries within the 129,000-acre Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve.

As we drive high into the hills in an open-topped truck, a few butterflies flit about, offering a hint of what awaits ahead. Riding small Mexican horses provided by the local community (and led by your own caballero, so no prior horseback experience is necessary), we ascend the trail through the forest as hummingbirds and red warblers accompany us to the heart of the monarchs' migration site. What we find is an almost surreal sight. At first glance, it looks as though the trees are covered with rusty autumn leaves. But soon we realize we are looking at millions of butterflies, covering the oyamel fir trees in a delicate, quivering blanket of black and orange. Boughs bend beneath their numbers, though each butterfly weighs less than half an ounce. Massed together in a colony, they cling to the trees in huge clusters to survive the cool winter temperatures. When the sun warms their parchment-thin wings, the monarchs take to the sky in a fluttering cloud of orange—so many that the air hums with their movement. Mexico's sanctuaries are the only place in the world where you can actually hear butterflies' wings beating. Their beauty is so ethereal that many Mexicans still hold the Aztec belief that the souls of the dead are reborn as monarchs.

Day 3: Angangueo—Chincua Sanctuary

At Chincua Butterfly Sanctuary, another magical encounter with the monarchs awaits. Riding horses along the established trail most of the way, we hike in the last bit to reach the mariposas. Sometimes the stream along the forest floor appears to flow orange, covered completely by butterflies as they descend to drink. As Mexican butterfly conservationist Carlos Gottfried said, "When you stand in a monarch sanctuary, your soul is shaken and your life is changed." During our visit, we hear about efforts to preserve this fragile forest ecosystem that is the key to the monarchs' survival, learning about what WWF–Mexico is doing in conjunction with local communities to protect the butterflies' habitat. Our visit is one way to assist, demonstrating to the local people that ecotourism can be a more viable and sustainable source of economic sustenance than logging. Later this afternoon, there's time to discover more of the village of Angangueo, known for its magnificent murals celebrating the importance of monarchs to the community.



Day 4: Angangueo—El Rosario Sanctuary / Jungapeo

This morning we return to El Rosario to observe the butterflies in the early morning light. In contrast to our previous afternoon visit, we'll witness the monarchs as they awaken for the day, hoping the sun will shine and warm their wings, prompting lively activity. As the butterflies take flight, we may see them float down to drink nectar from flowers or even alight on an arm or shoulder. The largest of the monarch sanctuaries in the region, El Rosario offers the best opportunity to view large numbers of monarchs in one location. After lunch, we travel to Jungapeo to reach our ecolodge and spa, tucked into the mountains of Michoacan. Renowned for its mineral thermal springs and soaking pools, our hotel's lush grounds are home to myriad species of tropical birds. Spend the afternoon soaking it all in. Take a dip in the legendary springs, scout for birds across the verdant grounds, hike to a nearby waterfall, book a spa treatment, or simply relax.

Day 5: Jungapeo / Toluca / Mexico City

Awaken to a symphony of tropical birdsong emanating from surrounding trees and bushes as we enjoy a peaceful morning at our eco-resort. After lunch we begin our return journey to Mexico City, stopping en route in Toluca, originally a 13th-century indigenous settlement, to visit Cosmovitral Botanical Garden. The building's interior, which houses 500 plant species from Mexico and around the world, glows with the ethereal light of stained-glass panels created by Toluca artist Leopoldo Flores. Say farewell over a classic Mexican feast before returning to the capital this evening for a late check-in at our hotel.

Day 6: Mexico City / Depart

Our monarch butterfly tour concludes with a transfer to the airport for flights home.



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Accommodation Details:

Plaza Don Gabino Hotel

Agua Blanca

Grand Fiesta Americana Hotel

Hotel La Margarita

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/central-america/monarch-butterfly-tour/accommodations

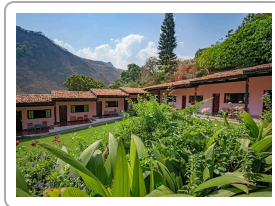
Kingdom of the Monarchs Accommodations

Witness Mexico's Amazing Migration of Millions of Butterflies!



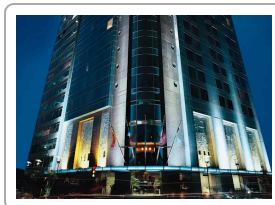
Plaza Don Gabino Hotel

This small and simple family-operated hotel offers clean, colorful rooms, homecooked local fare in the dining room, and warm hospitality -- all with easy access to the monarch sanctuaries.



Agua Blanca

Tucked within the mountains of Michoacan, Hotel Agua Blanca is a secluded ecolodge renowned for its mineral hot springs and natural surroundings.



Grand Fiesta Americana Hotel

The 4-star Grand Fiesta Americana Chapultepec is one of Mexico City's finest hotels, enjoying an ideal location facing the verdant expanse of Chapultepec Park, with proximity to all the buzz of cosmopolitan Mexico City.



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Hotel La Margarita

This small hotel near the center of the historic silver mining town of Anguango provides clean, colorful rooms with modest amenities, and is an ideal base for visiting the monarch colonies.



See More Butterflies on Our All-Inclusive, In-Depth Journey

Visiting Mexico's monarchs in their remote winter roosting sites is an unusual nature experience that few travelers have access to. Our all-encompassing itinerary gives you extensive time among the butterflies, as well as a chance to enjoy authentic cultural encounters in the remote mountain communities we visit. Only Nat Hab offers this rare full-package adventure!

- 1 Make Three Different Monarch Sanctuary Visits**Very few companies offer tours to see the migration phenomenon of Mexico's monarch butterflies. Of those that do, typically just a day trip is provided to one sanctuary. Our full package features a comprehensive itinerary including three separate monarch sanctuary visits, with all accommodations, meals and round-trip transportation from Mexico City.
- 2 Our Small Groups Tread Lightly**We limit our groups to approximately 16 guests to our ecological impact and an foster a quiet, wondrous experience with the butterflies.
- 3 Enjoy Authentic Cultural Encounters**Unlike most butterfly tours, which are simply day trips to a single sanctuary, we also include several cultural encounters to enhance your authentic Mexico experience. At Toluca, originally an Indigenous settlement founded in the 13th century, we tour the Cosmovitral Botanic Gardens and stained glass panels. We also enjoy a town tour of Angangueo learning about its history and growth through Monarch tourism.
- 4 Mexican Lodgings & Cuisine with Local Color**From a cozy inn in the small mountain hamlet of Angangueo to a family owned Spa and Healing center near Jungapeo known for its thermal springs, our accommodations are chosen for their authenticity, charm, natural environs and access to the butterflies. We also savor home-cooked dishes sourced from fresh local food, reflecting the region's cultural heritage.
- 5 Your Presence Makes a Difference for the Future of Monarchs**Your experience is enhanced by knowing that our presence is essential to the butterflies' continued survival: visitors demonstrate to locals that ecotourism can be a more viable and sustainable source of economic well-being than resource exploitation.



6

Our Guide-to-Traveler Ratio Ensures Personalized Service and Attention

While the number of guides leading your trip depends on the number in the group (usually not more than 16, the maximum guest-to-guide ratio will never be more than 8:1, ensuring a quiet, low-impact experience with the butterflies.

7

Outstanding Expedition Leaders with Unsurpassed Experience

Nat Hab has a well-deserved international reputation for employing the highest-quality Expedition Leaders in the industry. Our monarch guides have years of experience, with in-depth training as naturalists. And, they receive additional resources from WWF's top scientists. See our **Expedition Leader bios** with traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

8

Our Quality-Value Guarantee Promises a Superlative Butterfly Adventure

With Natural Habitat Adventures, you receive our exclusive guarantee that clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company.

9

Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.

10

Natural Habitat Adventures is WWF's Travel Partner

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the planet's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat Adventures its worldwide travel partner—a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!



Make It Private with Your Family or Friends

Travel privately, exclusively with your immediate family, multi-generational family or group of friends. And when you choose a private departure, you're assured the most exclusive and authentic Kingdom of the Monarchs adventure on offer. Request your private departure by completing the form below.

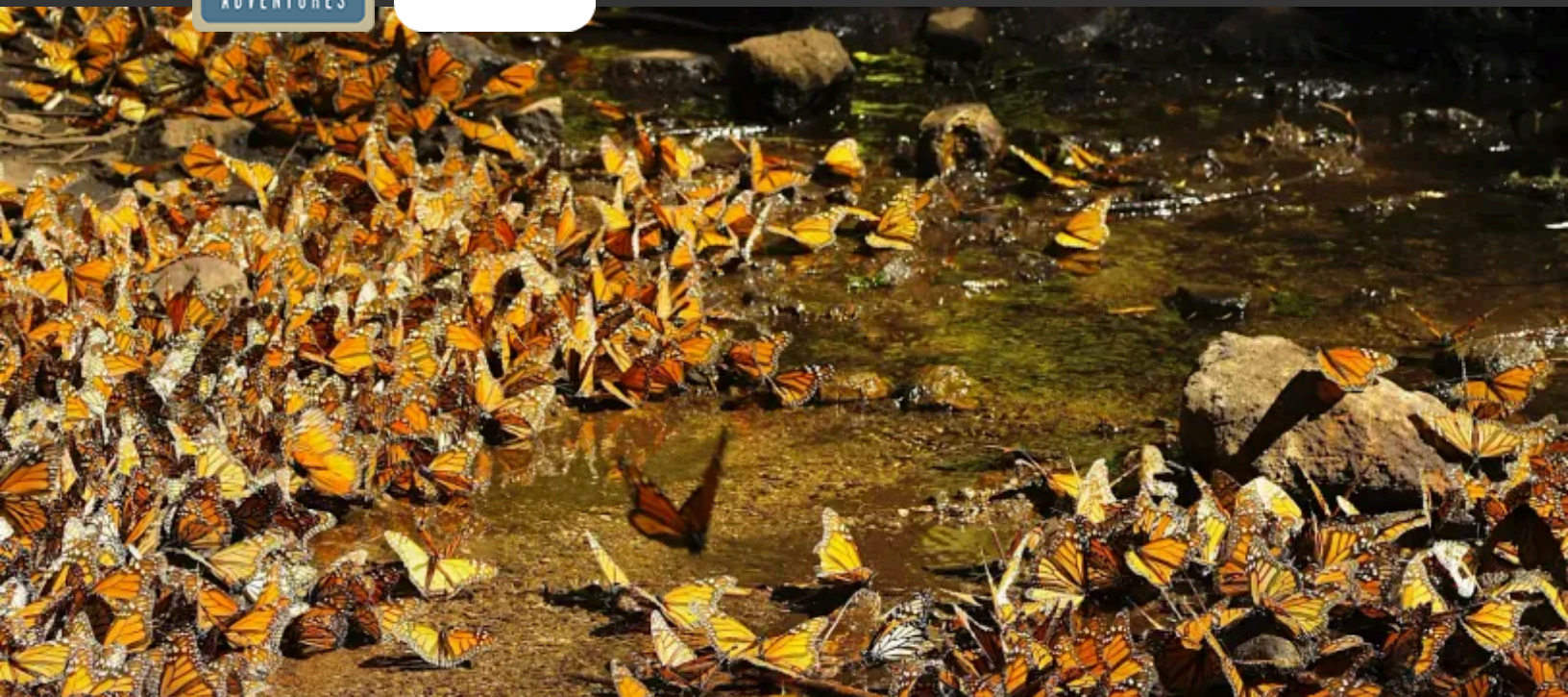
Please note that on Monarchs Make It Private departures we require a minimum group size of 8 travelers.

Also, please be aware that your per-person cost on a Make It Private trip will vary depending on the number of travelers in your group and may be as much as 10%-30% higher (ship-based trips may be even higher) than our normal trip cost unless you fill the trip.

This **Make It Private** option is available on nearly every Nat Hab trip for family and friend groups. Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917 or look for the "Make It Private" icon in the **pricing section** of a trip online at nathab.com to see prices based on your specific group size.



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices: From \$5295

Group Size: Limited to 16 Travelers

Physical Requirements: Moderate/Difficult

Kingdom of the Monarchs Dates, Pricing & Info

Witness Mexico's Amazing Migration of Millions of Butterflies!

2025 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Dec 1, 2025	Dec 6, 2025	Habitat Club Pricing Available
Dec 2, 2025	Dec 7, 2025	
Dec 7, 2025	Dec 12, 2025	
Dec 8, 2025	Dec 13, 2025	

2026 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Jan 3, 2026	Jan 8, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip
Jan 4, 2026	Jan 9, 2026	
Jan 6, 2026	Jan 11, 2026	
Jan 10, 2026	Jan 15, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip
Jan 11, 2026	Jan 16, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices:
From \$5295

Group Size:
Limited to 16 Travelers

Physical Requirements:
Moderate/Difficult

Departure	Return	Notes
Jan 17, 2026	Jan 22, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip
Jan 18, 2026	Jan 23, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip
Jan 20, 2026	Jan 25, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip
Jan 24, 2026	Jan 29, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels trip
Jan 26, 2026	Jan 31, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips Women's Journey
Jan 27, 2026	Feb 1, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 2, 2026	Feb 7, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 7, 2026	Feb 12, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 8, 2026	Feb 13, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips Women's Journey
Feb 10, 2026	Feb 15, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 14, 2026	Feb 19, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 17, 2026	Feb 22, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 21, 2026	Feb 26, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 23, 2026	Feb 28, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips Habitat Club Pricing Available
Feb 24, 2026	Mar 1, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Feb 28, 2026	Mar 5, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Mar 1, 2026	Mar 6, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Mar 2, 2026	Mar 7, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Mar 3, 2026	Mar 8, 2026	Pair with our Costa Rica Jewels and Baja trips
Dec 6, 2026	Dec 11, 2026	
Dec 7, 2026	Dec 12, 2026	
Dec 13, 2026	Dec 18, 2026	
Dec 14, 2026	Dec 19, 2026	

2027 Departures



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices: From \$5295

Group Size: Limited to 16 Travelers

Physical Requirements: Moderate/Difficult

Departure	Return	Notes
Jan 2, 2027	Jan 7, 2027	
Jan 3, 2027	Jan 8, 2027	
Jan 4, 2027	Jan 9, 2027	
Jan 5, 2027	Jan 10, 2027	
Jan 9, 2027	Jan 14, 2027	
Jan 10, 2027	Jan 15, 2027	
Jan 12, 2027	Jan 17, 2027	
Jan 16, 2027	Jan 21, 2027	
Jan 17, 2027	Jan 22, 2027	
Jan 19, 2027	Jan 24, 2027	
Jan 24, 2027	Jan 29, 2027	
Jan 25, 2027	Jan 30, 2027	
Jan 26, 2027	Jan 31, 2027	
Feb 1, 2027	Feb 6, 2027	
Feb 2, 2027	Feb 7, 2027	
Feb 6, 2027	Feb 11, 2027	
Feb 7, 2027	Feb 12, 2027	
Feb 9, 2027	Feb 14, 2027	
Feb 14, 2027	Feb 19, 2027	
Feb 15, 2027	Feb 20, 2027	
Feb 16, 2027	Feb 21, 2027	
Feb 20, 2027	Feb 25, 2027	
Feb 21, 2027	Feb 26, 2027	
Feb 22, 2027	Feb 27, 2027	



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Departure	Return	Notes
Feb 23, 2027	Feb 28, 2027	
Feb 27, 2027	Mar 4, 2027	
Feb 28, 2027	Mar 5, 2027	
Mar 1, 2027	Mar 6, 2027	
Mar 2, 2027	Mar 7, 2027	



Pricing

2025 Prices

> **Trip Price**
\$5295 - \$5495

Single Occupancy: For a single room add \$995. **Click here** to learn how you can avoid the single supplement.

Deposit: \$500 per person

Make It Private: **View pricing** to take this trip privately with just you and your select travel companions.

Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars. Prices for Dec are not yet confirmed. Contact an Adventure Specialist for more details: 800-543-8917. **Please read our Payment & Refund Policy here.**



2026 Prices

Mouse over or tap dates above to view prices for specific departure dates.

> **Trip Price**
\$5295 to \$5495

Single Occupancy: For a single room add \$995. **Click here** to learn how you can avoid the single supplement.

Deposit: \$500 per person

Make It Private: **View pricing** to take this trip privately with just you and your select travel companions.

Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars. Prices for December are not yet confirmed. Contact an Adventure Specialist for more details: 800-543-8917. **Please read our Payment & Refund Policy here.**

2027 Prices

We're still in the process of confirming 2027 pricing. Please contact an Adventure Specialist for more details: 800-543-8917.

Included

Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s), all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.



Physical Requirements

Moderate / Difficult

Visiting the butterfly sanctuaries requires walking through the forest for approximately 3 to 4 miles round-trip, at altitudes that could reach up to 11,000 feet. Because the location of the butterflies within the sanctuaries changes throughout the season and from year to year, exact hiking distances on each departure can vary. At times, the terrain can be rough and rocky, and we will have to traverse uneven ground and step over or around sticks and branches. Uneven, steep inclines may require us to maintain balance as we watch the butterflies. The effects of altitude should not be underestimated. **The physical exertion involved can be considered strenuous for people who are less active and not accustomed to hiking at altitude.**

The entrance to El Rosario butterfly sanctuary can only be accessed via a 30-minute, open-bed truck ride over cobblestone roads, which can make for a somewhat bumpy ride and may be considered uncomfortable for travelers with back or neck issues. Once inside the sanctuaries, horses are available to ride uphill to reach the butterfly colonies, but not down. When riding the horses, we will be led by a local guide through trails that can, at times, be narrow and rugged, so riders must be alert and maintain balance. Travelers should expect to spend 30-45 minutes on horseback at a time. Due to the diminutive stature of the local horses, the maximum rider weight each horse can carry is 260 pounds.

It is important to note that even with the option to ride horses, there will still be some hiking involved while going up to the colonies, as the horses cannot travel the entire length of the trail. After dismounting, travelers will be required to walk a final 1/4 to 2 miles up a steep slope to reach the butterfly colonies. Depending on where the butterflies are located, this final slope can be less steep at times. Anyone who opts not to ride horses will have an approximately 3-mile uphill hike with roughly 1,000 ft. elevation gain. All travelers must hike downhill back to the sanctuary entrance, descending at least 600 steps over approximately 3 miles, with an elevation change of about 1,000 feet.

Important Information About This Trip

The monarch butterfly sanctuaries in Mexico's Central Highlands are a marvel no nature lover should miss! Observing millions of monarchs clustering and moving together is a wondrous experience. This trip can be more strenuous than most, however, so please read carefully the section on Physical Requirements above.

Click here to see examples of the hiking and horseback riding activities you can expect on this trip.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to on this trip are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require medical evacuation insurance for our guests' safety. If you decline the medical evacuation insurance coverage offered by Natural Habitat, we request that you send us documentation of the independent coverage you have selected. We will add the cost of a medical evacuation policy to your tour invoice until you provide our office with proof of coverage, including your insurance company's name, contact number and your individual policy number. Thank you for understanding that our policy exists exclusively in the interest of our guests' safety.



Getting There & Getting Home

Plan to arrive in Mexico City no later than 5:30 pm on Day 1 of the adventure, as there is a group welcome dinner and orientation at 7 pm. You are free to depart anytime on the final day.

We can best serve you if our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk makes your reservations, as we are intimately familiar with the special requirements of this program and can arrange the most efficient travel. Please call us at 800-543-8917. Note that while we offer you the best possible rates available to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may find special web rates or better fares online.



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Extension Details:

The Great Gray Whales of Baja
\$5795

Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer
\$7995

Natural Jewels of Costa Rica
\$9695

Kingdom of the Monarchs Extensions

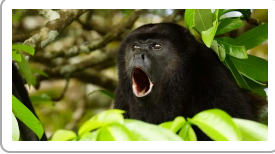
Witness Mexico's Amazing Migration of Millions of Butterflies!



The Great Gray Whales of Baja

On skiff excursions from our shorefront whale camp, come within arm's length of amiable gray whales and their calves, as these gentle giants birth and nurture their young in the warm Pacific waters of San Ignacio Lagoon.

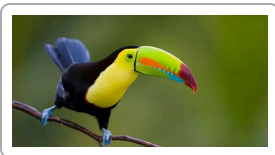
\$5795



Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer

See another side of Costa Rica on this adventure into rainforests, mist-shrouded mountains and coastlines well off the typical tourist track, and enjoy remote and authentic ecolodges en route.

\$7995 (+air)



Natural Jewels of Costa Rica

An all-encompassing nature expedition through the jungle canals of Tortuguero to the misty cloud forests of Monteverde and Corcovado's wild beaches—discover Costa Rica's exceptional biodiversity.

\$9695 (+air)



Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.