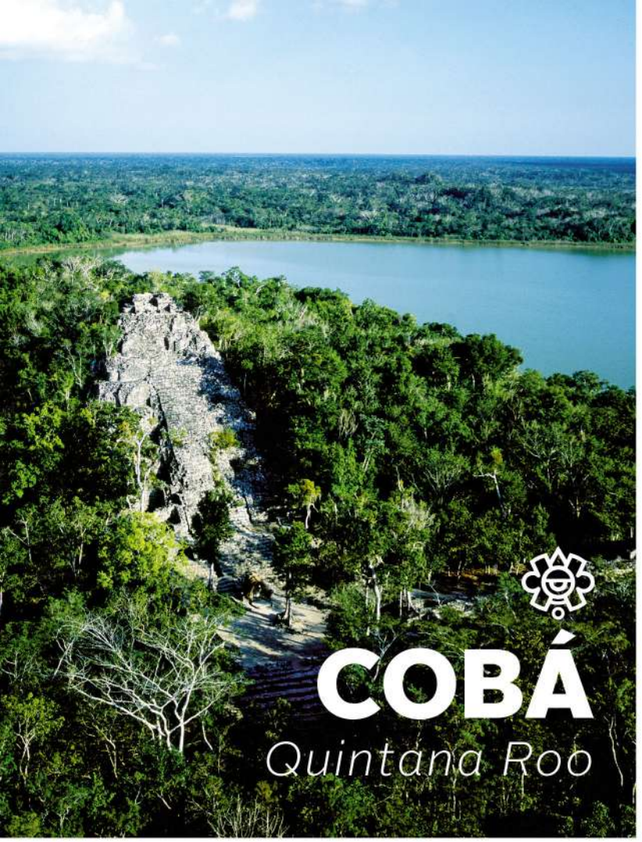


COBÁ
Quintana Roo

BRIEF HISTORICAL REVIEW

*Cobá was the largest pre-Columbian settlement in the Mayan plains to the northeast of the **Yucatán Peninsula**. The city spreads over an area of 70 square kilometers (approximately 27 square miles), which speaks of its magnitude and power. The center of the city developed around five lagoons, this bolstered the conditions both for the subsistence and the development of what would become a great metropolis. The raised stone roads used for internal transportation are among its main traits. Some of these, known in Maya as **sacbé**, extended to villages far away, which allowed, not only communication with these regions, but also their control.*

*Its development began at the dawn of our era as a group of small villages near lakes, with an economy based on agriculture and hunting. Already an important urban center during the Classic period, it further developed as it gradually extended its control over nearby towns. Over time, it became a **regional capital**, maintained relations with Petén, in Guatemala, and with the Gulf Coast of Mexico. Between 1000 and 1250 A.D. it was already influenced by the Itzaes, and its power diminished between 1250 and 1450 A.D. During this period the most important relations were with Mayapán and with the groups established in the east coast of the Yucatán Peninsula.*

TOPONYM	"Muddy water or choppy water"
CULTURE	Maya
PERIOD	from Late Preclassic to Late Postclassic
TIMESPAN	300 BC - 1540 AD

GETTING THERE

Exiting Cancun, take the federal highway number 307 southbound and when you reach Tulum, there is a northwest road that leads to Nuevo Xcan, after 47 km (29 miles) you will reach the town and the archaeological site of Cobá.

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Sunday, from 8am to 5pm (last admission is at 4:30pm).

ADMISSIONS

The cost of admission is the one established annually by the Federal Law of Rights. Credit and debit cards are accepted. Free admission for children under 13 years of age, students and teachers with valid credential, senior citizens, retirees, pensioners, disabled, as well as workers and researchers of the INAH. On Sundays, admission is free for Mexican nationals and residents of Mexico who present a valid identification.

PHOTOGRAPHY

For the use of any recording device there is a fee authorized by the Ministry of Finance. The taking of non-professional photographs, without a tripod, has no cost.

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CULTURA
SECRETARÍA DE CULTURA

INAH

DISCOVER IT YOURSELF

Cobá Group

This group of buildings located along the edge of two lagoons is the earliest and most important section of the site. It has more than fifty buildings, several courtyards, vaulted rooms, shrines, a large square, a ballcourt, and the second highest building on the site, known as La Iglesia (the church) –comprised of nine bodies with rounded corners. In this group we find eight sculpted stelae. There, six sacbés start and finish in groups of buildings of various sizes and importance. The ballcourt has two rings and panels embedded in the embankment with depictions of prisoners. Various activities of the everyday, political and religious life of the city took place on the square located across from La Iglesia.





Macanxoc Group

It can be found by walking along one of the sacbés of the city, the widest one, a path where you will find several stelae and shrines. The buildings are based on a great stretch of levelled ground and raise to heights of 1 to 4 meters (approximately 3 to 13 feet). It has three buildings of considerable height not yet explored and other ones of different dimensions. The eight carved stelae are largely eroded by the weather and the passage of time, making it difficult to distinguish the representations depicted on them. Nonetheless, one can see that they share the same theme: a richly dressed person holding a large ceremonial bar over his chest and accompanied by prisoners found under his feet and/or to his sides. Several glyphs frame the scene. The dates recorded in these monuments correspond to the 7th century of our era.



Nohoch Mul Group

This group does not have a large number of buildings, but it has the largest ones of the whole site. Only three have been explored and can be visited. The word *nohoch mul* in Maya, meaning big mound, correspon to a name given in modern times that relates directly to the main and highest structure of all Cobá, which is 42 meters (approximately 137 feet) high. This imposing building has two stairways on its front, one that reaches the top and a parallel one that reaches a vaulted room at a lower level. The construction consists of a base of seven bodies with rounded corners, with an upper temple, showing the latest architectonic traits of the region and sharing features with sites of the east coast of the peninsula. The best preserved stela of all found so far rises in the great square of this group, it is dated 780 of our era.

OUTSTANDING STRUCTURE

Xaibé

Xaibé is the most unique building because of its unusual shape. It has four molded bodies and lacks an upper structure. What appears to be a staircase cannot be one as the dimensions are disproportionate. Several sacbés converge near this building, so its name in Maya means "crossroads." Its function has not been determined, although some studies have discarded the possibility it may be an observatory.



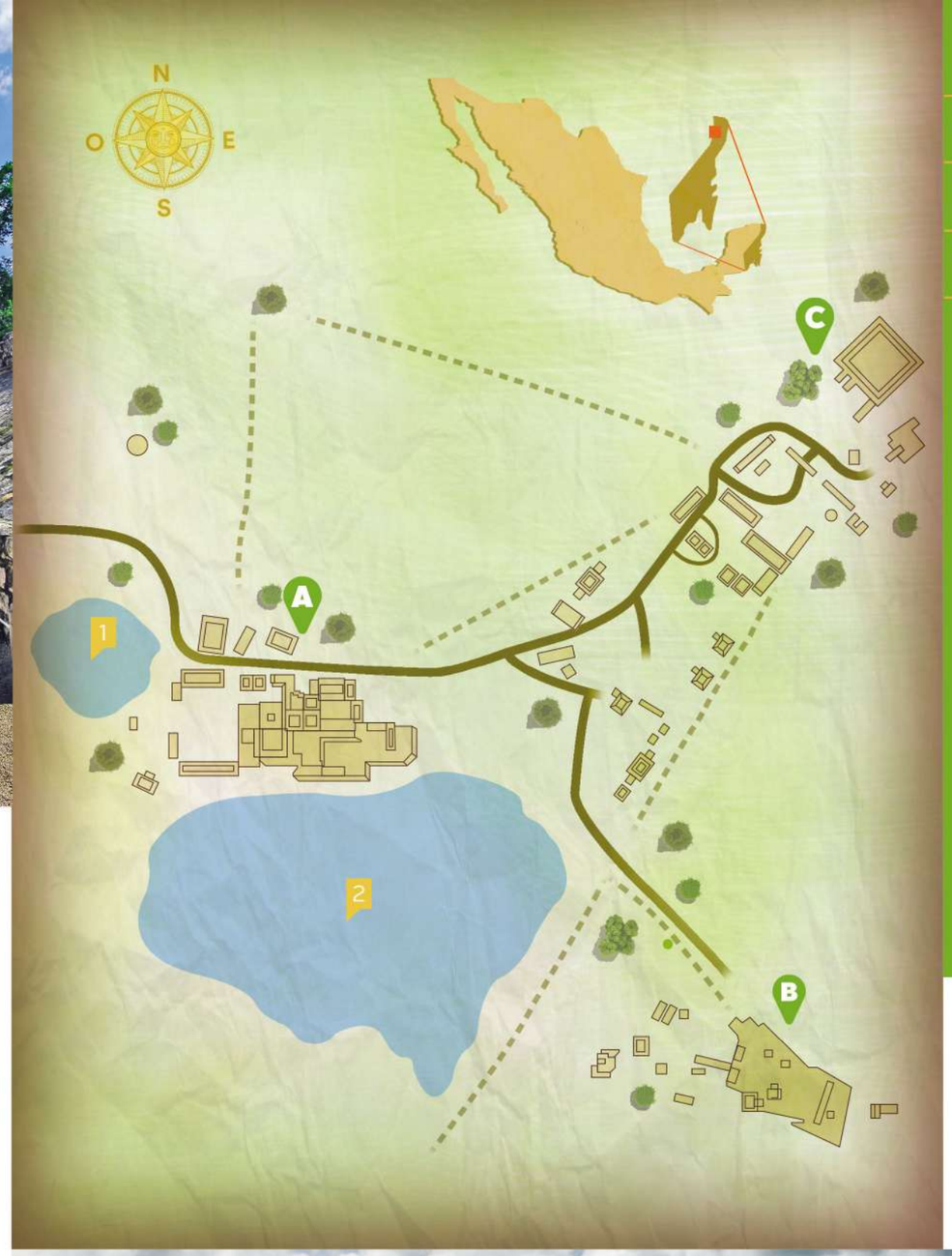


ARCHITECTURE

The archaeological city has numerous buildings that create squares and patios with a defined orientation. Its architecture combines horizontality with verticality, as there are high bases with vaulted rooms in the upper part, long vaulted buildings and also platforms with long stairs.

The material used in the construction of the buildings was carved limestone, which was then covered with thick layers of stucco sometimes painted red. They also used sculpted stucco as decoration on friezes and facades, and occasionally the interior walls of rooms were painted with assorted scenes.

Cobá is one of the few ancient cities that still holds its pre-Columbian name.



MUST-SEE

- A *Cobá Group*
- B *Macanxoc Group*
- C *Nohoch Mul Group*

1 Cobá Lake
2 Macanxoc Lake

DID YOU KNOW...?

- *It is the largest pre-Columbian city in the northeastern area of the Yucatán Peninsula.*
- *The first modern mention of Cobá is due to John L. Stephens, a famous 19th century traveler. However, the first visit was that of Yucatecan intellectuals Juan Peón Contreras and D. Elizalde in 1886.*
- *The first archaeological surveys took place in 1926, then resumed in 1972 and continue to this date.*
- *In 1933, Alfonso Villa Rojas traveled the 100 kilometers (approximately 62 miles) of length of Sacbé 1 which communicates Cobá with Yaxuná, a site near Chichén Itzá.*

SOME KEY NUMBERS

70	It extends over 70 square kilometers (approximately 27 square miles)
5	5 lagoons surround the site
50	33 engraved stelae
33	50 built roads
2	2 ballcourts

