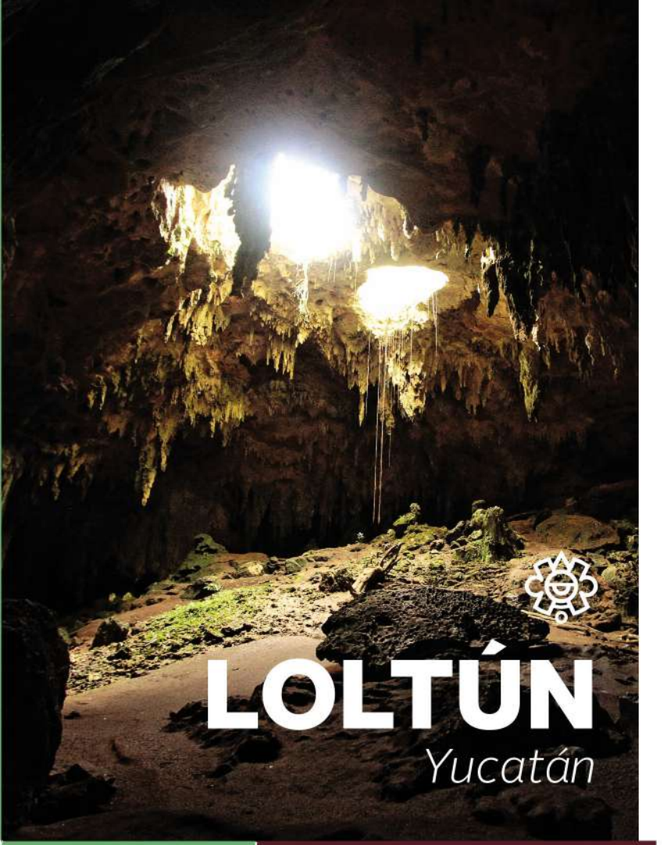


LOLTÚN
Yucatán

TOPONYM	From the Yucatec Mayan words "lol" meaning flower, and "tun" meaning stone: Flower Stone
CULTURE	Maya
PERIOD	Agricultural Village5500 a 2500 a C.
DATE	5500 to 2500 BC; 2500 to 1200 BC.

DISCOVER IT YOURSELF

The site has an east-west alignment and covers an area of 850 meters (0.5 miles approximately) by 500 meters (0.3 miles). The cave has two entrances: Loltún and Nahkab, about 700 meters (0.4 miles) apart. There are also nine other caves.

BRIEF HISTORICAL REVIEW

The evangelization of the native peoples of the region began in 1548, by 1562 ***Fray Diego de Landa*** *declared the religious practices of the natives "acts of Idolatry." This gave rise to the* ***Acto de Fe de Maní****, where valuable documents of the culture were burnt and destroyed. The cacique and governor of* ***Oxkutzcab*** *was involved in the trial.*

Later, Oxkutzcab became an encomienda and villagers were forced to tax cotton blankets, honey and other products.

In 1886 and 1892 ***Teoberto Maler*** *visited Loltún and drew some of the engravings and paintings found in the cave.* ***Edward H. Thompson*** *made two expeditions to the cave of Loltún, the first one with* ***Henry Sweet*** *and* ***Clifton Paige*** *in 1888. The second expedition took place in 1890. In the excavations of chamber 3 obsidian tips, jade earrings, shell fragments, human skeletons and ceramic fragments were found.*

In order to study the social and physical evolution of humanity in America, in 1895, ***Henry C. Mercer*** *from the University of Pennsylvania, visited 29 caves and excavated 10 in the Puuc mountain range. The research did not show a similar antiquity to caves found in Europe.*

In 1960, ***Jack Grant*** *and* ***Bill Dailey*** *produced the first plan of the cave and found the Cabeza de Loltún (Head of Loltún). In 1978, the INAH carried out its first excavations, led by the* ***archeologist Ricardo Velázquez Valadez.***

The remains recovered in the explorations carried out in the 70s and 80s indicate that the occupation of the cave of Loltún dates back to about 9000 years BC. At that time, the cave must have been a niche abundant in natural resources that were used by hunter-gatherer groups. Evidence of this was found in some of the lithic and bone remains, pictorial motifs and remains of now extinct fauna, all with possible traces of wear. In later dates, and after an apparent abandonment during the Archaic Period, about 7000 to 3000 years ago, the cave was again occupied by sedentary groups, who gave it prolonged use and ritual character, following the pre-Columbian worldview of the peoples of the Yucatán Peninsula.

Loltún and the important evidence found there, make the site the only cave in northern Yucatán with a clear archaeological trace from the archaic period.

GETTING THERE

By public transport to Oxkutzcab and from Oxkutzcab it is necessary to take a taxi to Loltún.

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Sunday, 8am to 5pm

ADMISSION

The cost of admission is the one established by the Federal Law of Rights. 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.

PHOTOGRAPHY

For the use of any video making device, there is a cost costs established by the Federal Law of Rights. The taking of non-professional photographs, without a tripod, has no cost.

www.inah.gob.mx
www.difusion.inah.gob.mx
@inah_mx
Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia
©INAH, México, 2016

TEXTS
Arqlgo. José Huchim

TRANSLATION
Victoria Padilla Bernal

PRODUCTION
Head of Comunications of the National Office of Broadcasting, INAH

DESIGN
César Enríquez

CULTURA
SECRETARÍA DE CULTURA

INAH

Nahkab or Hive Entrance

On the wall there is bas-relief depiction of a well-dressed warrior standing barefoot as if walking, on his right hand he holds a spear in a vertical position, on the upper left section there is a cartridge of glyphs that ends with a number three. The figure shows a clear Mayan profile, however his thick lips are reminiscent of Olmec sculptures and the reliefs of Chalcatzingo. The Warrior is 2200 to 2500 years old, and is similar to stela 11 of Kaminaljuyu in Guatemala.

Main Gallery

On the left wall, 31 meters (about 101 feet) from the Nahkab entrance, there is an engraving called Roseta and between it and the entrance there are four aligned petroglyphs. In this gallery, and along the cave, you can find haltuno'ob or *sartenejas* for water storage.

La Mazorca de Maíz (The Corn Cob)

One of its stalactites resembles a corn cob due to its shape and texture, giving it its name. Towards the west side there is the Cathedral (Noh K'unah), its vault is the most impressive due to its size as it reaches 30 meters (98.4 feet) in height. At the center of the Cathedral is El Altar (The Shrine), a seemingly natural rock which shows traces of having been modified by man. At the end of the Cathedral, there is the Gallery of the Haltuno'ob, where there is overflowing water between a set of stalactites.

El Paso del Viento (Wind's passage)

It is a narrow passage, through which a wind current flows. During pre-Columbian times it could be exploited or channeled, or it could also have served to bound the area destined for clay exploitation. Towards the north side there is the Cuarto de las Columnas Musicales (Room of the Musical Columns), one of the columns emits a grave sound and another a sharp sound. Then, there is the gallery known as El Cuarto del Infante (The Infant's room), due to the excavation of the burial of a ten-year-old boy. In the same area there is the Mural de las Manos Negras (Mural of the Black Hands), made using a negative technique and whose purpose is to transcend time and space. The route continues to the gallery of the Chultún or cistern.

Galería del Gran Cañón (Gallery of the Grand Canyon) o Lubaan tunil (piedra caída, fallen stone)

It is the most spacious of the galleries. The space is 100 meters (328 feet) long by 45 meters (147.6 feet) wide. To the right it connects with Room, Lobby and Grand Canyon Complex.

Chambers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

Each one of them contains diverse representations like barricades constructed during the caste war of enormous proportions and with inscriptions and paintings, detachments and evidence of water erosion; archaeological remains such as *jaltunoob* with walls and a reddish colored vault.

OUTSTANDING STRUCTURE

Cuarto de las estalactitas (Room of the Stalactites)

Before arriving, you must go through the Galería de los Tres Caminos (Gallery of the Three Ways) that connects the Labyrinth or Maya Gallery, and communicates with the Cuarto del Órgano (Organ Room) and the Cuarto del Murciélago (Bat Room).
To the west of the Room of the Stalactites and going southwards through chamber 7, you pass through the Galería de las Pinturas (Gallery of Paintings) where you can see depictions of animals, human figures and stepped grecas. In the vault of this gallery small stalactites can be seen; local people call them showers due to their constant drip of water. Passing through the Paso del Jabón (Passage of the Soap) you continue towards the Main Gallery, Pak'il K'abb 'or Wall of the Hands, which consists of a group of paintings depicting black hands, done using the negative technique. Another highlight is a glyph depicting the profile of a Mayan figure.

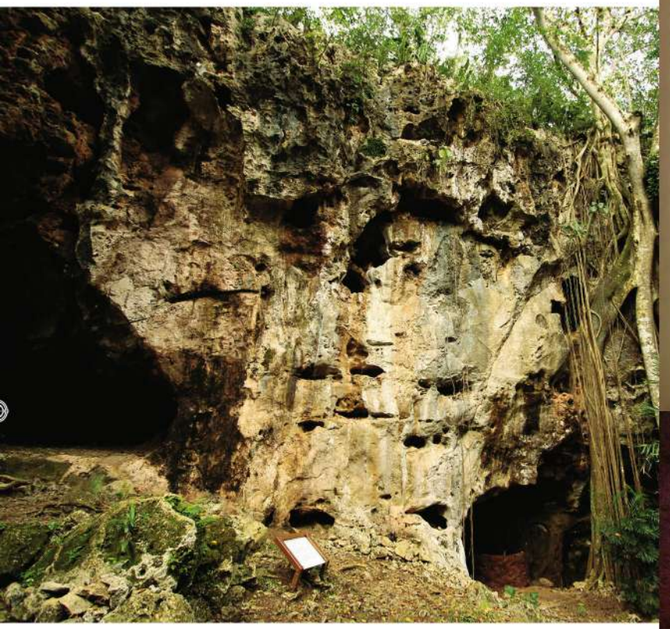


ARCHITECTURE

WHERE CAN I SEE IT?

At the entrance one can see a relief depicting a kneeling person with a headdress of a quadruped animal similar to a tapir.

Stones with reliefs that were recovered in the vicinity of Loltún are also displayed at the entrance of the cave.



EL GUERRERO DE LOLTÚN
(THE WARRIOR OF LOLTÚN)

The warrior of Loltún is dated 337 AD and is similar to stela 11 of Kaminaljuyu in Guatemala and to the Izapa style, from the Preclassic period.

The character is luxuriously dressed, in his right hand carries a spear inlaid with obsidian. On the left hand there is a Z-shaped instrument. The headdress is quite complex, the upper part can be identified as a snake mask with scrolls, at the bottom there is another mask with a large earwig and nose. The belt also has a mask.

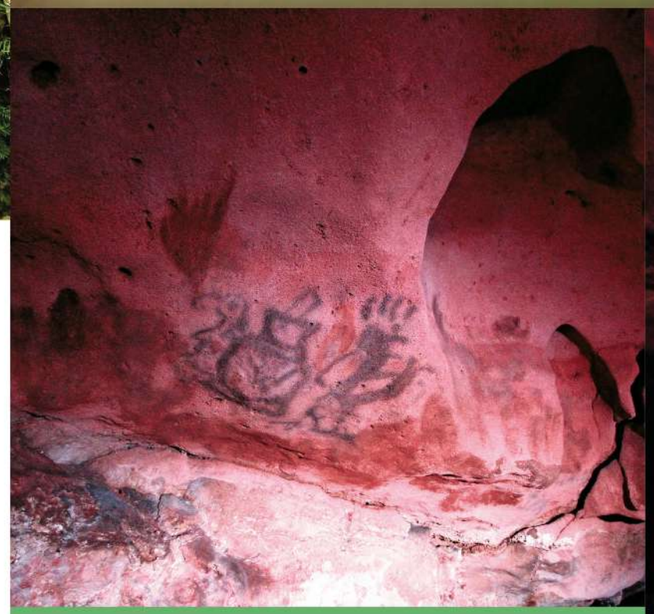
The belt's apron is shaped like a forked tongue indicating that the belt is also a snake. At the top of the relief there is a column with cartridges with the glyph Chuen (mono, monkey), the number 3 –corresponding to the 260 days calendar, and Zots (bat).



MUST-SEE

- A *Nahkab Entrance*
- B *Main Gallery*
- C *Gallery of Paintings*

1 The Cathedral
2 Loltún Head
3 The Infant's room
4 Gran Cañón
5 Jabonero
6 Stalactites
7 Chamber 3
8 Huechil Cave





The visit to the interior of the cave of Loltún will allow us to learn about the cultural displays made by the first settlers of the peninsula.

DID YOU KNOW...?

- *Remains of Pleistocene fauna were found in the cave of Loltún.*
- *The earliest settlement is found in Loltún.*
- *Humans lived in the cave of Loltún before the domestication of plants in the year 5500 BC.*
- *It was used for shelter by the first settlers of the peninsula, for clay extraction for pottery, as a water supply storage, and a place of worship and offerings.*



SOME KEY NUMBER

The cave extends over an area of 850 meters (0.5 miles) long by 500 meters (0.3 miles approximately) wide.

The recovered ceramic remains are over 3000 years old.

Incipient pre-ceramic or agricultural settlement dates back to 5500 - 2500 BC.

The agricultural settlement of the village took place during 2500 to 1200 BC. During the lower Preclassic, the settlement took place during the years 1200 to 600 BC.

Continue the tour through the archaeological sites of Labná, Xlapak, Sayil, Kabah, the Village of Santa Elena, and Uxmal.