



Ancient people had traditions and rituals dedicated to honoring their ancestors. In Mesoamerica, indigenous people

believe that souls do not die but rest placidly in a special place until the day they return to their earthly homes and visit their relatives:

November 1 and 2, the *Days of the Dead*. The annual return of monarch butterflies to Mexico in early November, each carrying the spirit of an ancestor, is part of that tradition, a fusion of pre-Columbian and Christian beliefs.

No darkness or sorrow accompanies the soul's journey home. These transcendent days are marked by feasts and celebrations: scents, colors, tastes, love and enjoyment await both the living and deceased. For Mexican people, the area around Lake Patzcuaro in the state of Michoacán ("Place of the Fishermen") is a special place to witness the happy and colorful *Days of the Dead* tradition.

Our tour guide, Marcos Garcia, will lead us west of Mexico City to Lake Patzcuaro, the cradle of the indigenous Purhepecha culture and a unique place to visit and explore. We will be welcomed by Purhepecha people as honored guests. They will guide and share with us their *Days of the Dead* celebrations, the beauty and hospitality of Purhepecha traditions, language, folklore, food and craftsmanship.

Find out more at our website:

www.MonarchTeacherNetwork.org

Itinerary:

Saturday, Day 1 (Oct 31): Arrive in Mexico City. Transfer to Royal Plaza hotel; tour Days of the Dead exhibits at the Zocalo (Mexico City's main square). Dinner: 7 pm

Sunday, Day 2 (Nov 1): Travel by first-class coach to Lake Patzcuaro in the state of Michoacán (picnic lunch); boat ride to Pacanda Island, an indigenous community. Welcome and orientation. Dinner on the island at our hotel; followed by traditional activities at Pacanda cemetery; may go beyond midnight.

Monday, Day 3 (Nov 2): Late traditional Purhepecha breakfast and lunch on the island with local people. Then we travel by boat to San Jeronimo/Santa Fe, indigenous communities along the lakeshore. We have traditional dinner in Santa Fe where we again join *Day of the Dead* celebration activities at the local cemetery, lasting late into the night. Accommodations are at Pacanda Island or San Jeronimo hotel.



Trip Itinerary—Continued:

Tuesday, Day 4 (Nov 3): Breakfast (9 am). Full-day exploration of traditional crafts (embroidery, basket-making, corn husk figures, pottery) under the guidance of local artisans. Learn techniques to make these works of art and make some of your own. Local traditional lunch. Accommodations and dinner that night at Hotel Posada Don Vasco in Patzcuaro.

Wednesday, Day 5 (Nov 4): Breakfast at hotel. Travel to Paricutin volcano. The most recent volcano in the western hemisphere, Paricutin grew from a cornfield in 1943, creating a cone 1,391 feet tall and burying two towns in lava. Hike to the now-quiet volcano and visit a church that was nearly buried in lava. Then we are off to down-town Morelia for accommodations and dinner at Hotel Soledad.

Trip Itinerary—Continued:

Thursday, Day 6 (Nov 5): Breakfast at hotel, followed by a tour of Morelia's sites, shops and artisans. Morelia, known as the "Queen of the Colonial Cities", is the capital of Michoacán. Lunch in downtown Morelia. Leave for Mexico City in the afternoon. Accommodations and dinner at the Royal Plaza Hotel.

Friday, Day 7 (Nov 6): Breakfast at hotel. Explore a World Heritage Site: *Xochimilco*... the "floating gardens". Take the Boat ride, lunch and tour, followed in the afternoon by a tour of the *Dolores Olmedo Museum*, a colonial hacienda that houses one of the finest collections of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo artwork in the world. Return to Royal Plaza Hotel; farewell dinner in Mexico City.

Saturday, Day 8 (Nov 7): Hotel breakfast, then transfer to airport for flight home.

Trip information, cost and applications:

www.MonarchTeacherNetwork.org

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Experience the REAL MEXICO, with Monarch Teacher Network



- Witness first-hand the *Days of the Dead* traditions in one of the most unique places to see it.
- Experience the customs, language, food, folklore and beliefs of the indigenous people of Michoacán: the Purhepecha.
- Explore Paricutin, the newest volcano in the western hemisphere, that grew out of a cornfield, overwhelming two towns.
- Tour Xochimilco, the “floating gardens”, a World Heritage site.
- Try your hand at traditional Michoacan crafts, guided by local artisans.
- Experience the life of an indigenous island community, Pacanda,
- Tour one of the finest collections of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo artwork in the world.

Adults of all professions and interests are welcome to participate in this unique experience. Teachers who participate will receive 36 hours of NJ Professional Development credits.

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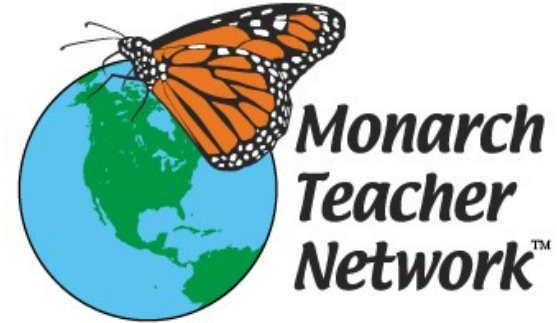
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What is....

Monarch Teacher Network?



It is a growing network of people from all professions, businesses, and backgrounds: Americans, Canadians, Mexicans.... educators, gardeners, naturalists, retirees... all motivated by the thrill of discovery and a passion for learning. Travel with *Monarch Teacher Network* and experience a personal journey of discovery into a world you've always known ... but never really knew.



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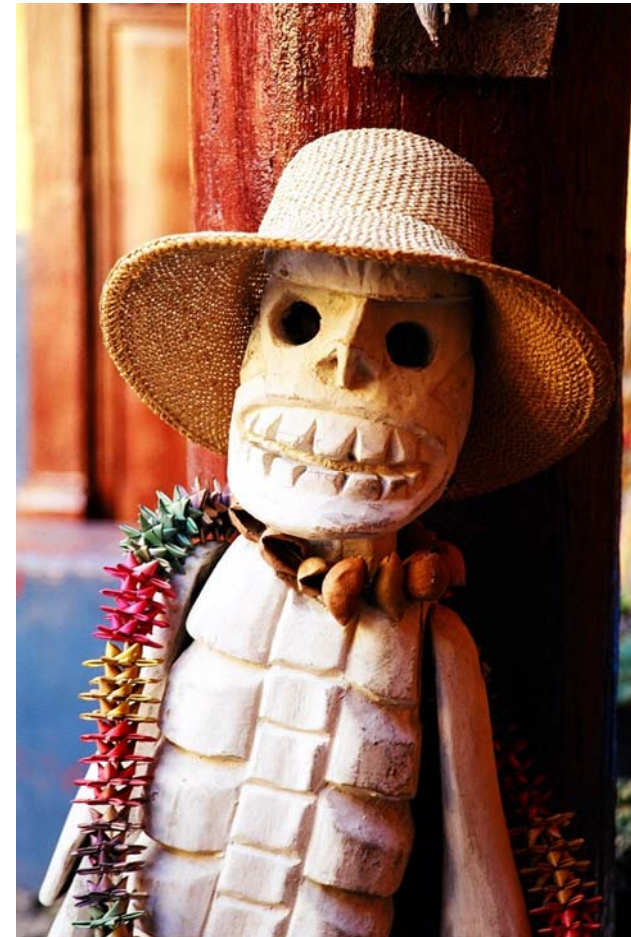
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Celebrate the Days of the Dead in Mexico



Travel to Mexico with Monarch Teacher Network and experience the happy and colorful tradition of the Days of the Dead.

October 31—November 7, 2009