

Climb the tallest temple

The ruins at Coba are much different than Chichen Itza and Ek Balam. Instead of freshly mown lawns, you'll find jungle trails linking the structures. Therefore, the site has a much more adventurous atmosphere. The main attraction is the towering Nohoch Mul pyramid. At 42 meters (137 feet), this is the tallest temple in the Yucatan. Climbing to the top is a challenge that yields a magnificent view of the jungle canopy. While at the top, look for hills in the otherwise flat landscape. There are no hills in the Yucatan, so any high spots that you see are temples consumed by jungle.

Rating Coba attractions

Coba ruins★★★★
Crowds are much smaller than Chichen Itza, plus you can climb the tallest temple in the Yucatan.

Coba village★
A quick walk from the ruins to the bus station and you've seen it all.

Cenotes near Coba★★★
See Map O, below right.

Hotels

Villas ArqueológicasM1
www.villasarqueologicas.com.mx (987) 872-9300
This is the only really nice hotel in Coba, and the only one we saw with a pool. \$90us with AC.

Sac-BeM3
Very basic, but clean rooms. \$40us with AC.

Posada BocaditoM4
\$14us with ceiling fan (no hot water). \$34 with AC and hot water.

Coba Mayan ruins

Hours: 7am to 5pm
Parking: 15 pesos
Admission: 48 pesos (\$4.50us); video camera, 30 pesos (\$3us).
Guides:
• 45-minutes, 300 pesos (\$28us).
• 90-minutes, 550 pesos (\$52us).
Available in Spanish, English, French, German, Italian, & Mayan.

Bike rental: 30 pesos (\$3us)
We really liked having bikes, especially to visit the distant Macanxoc group of ruins.

"Limo trike:" 95 pesos (\$9us)
A driver will pedal through the jungle as you relax and enjoy the view.

Restrooms: Located next to the ticket booth. There are no restrooms inside the park. Don't forget mosquito repellent!

Ball Court #1 & "The Church" M17, M18

Just inside the entrance is a Mayan ball court, one of several in Coba. It is overshadowed by a temple called "The Church." At 75 feet tall (24 meters), it's similar in height to the pyramid at Chichen Itza—and this is Coba's smaller pyramid! Due to loose stones on the steep steps (it's almost like climbing a ladder), tourists are no longer allowed to climb to the top. "The Church" got its name from the Spanish, who compared it to the towering European cathedrals. Next to "the church" is a long stone tunnel that you can walk through. The roof is constructed at an angle so the weight of each stone locks the others in place. The Mayans were very ingenious architects.

Nohoch Mul..... M24

In Mayan, "Nohoch" means big, and "Mul" means pyramid or hill. But we call this pyramid "The Mayan stress test!" You'll understand why once you climb the 120 steps to the top. The stairway is wide enough for a dozen people to comfortably climb at the same time, but the steps themselves are barely wide enough for your feet, making the climb even more difficult. We always climb at an angle, weaving back and forth across the stairway as we climb. It's said that this is how the Mayans also climbed their temples, because the path resembles a snake slithering to the top. The walk from the park entrance to the base of Nohoch Mul takes about 25 to 30 minutes.

The Macanxoc Group.... M19

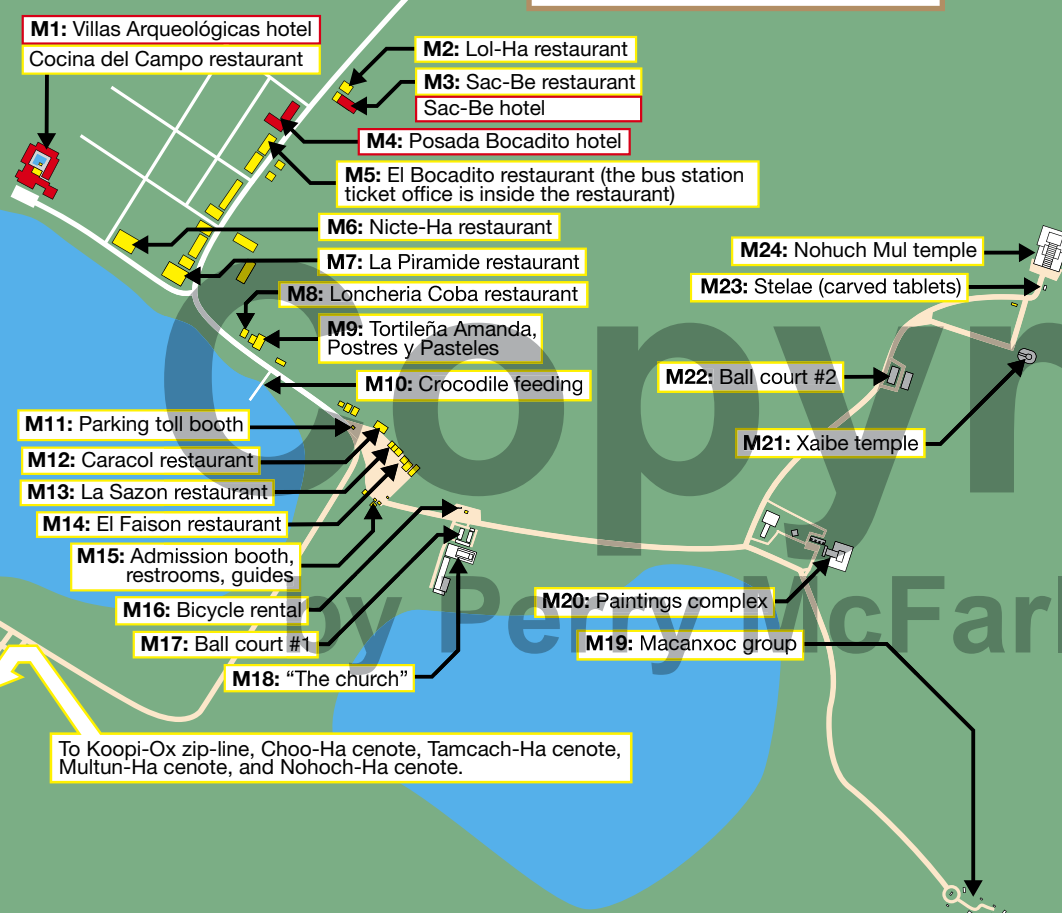
There are no large temples here. This ceremonial area is lined with stelae (carved stone tablets that tell the history of the Mayans). Most of the people you'll see in this area are artists with their sketchbooks; amateur archaeologists with their Coba guidebooks; or couples just enjoying a long, leisurely walk.



Nohoch Mul temp

More Ruin Attractions:

Admission..... M15
Ball court #2..... M22
Bicycle rental M16
Guides..... M15
Paintings complex M20
Stelae (carved tablets) M23
Xaibe temple M21



Restaurants

Cocina del Campo M1
Located next to the hotel pool, this is the most elegant dining in Coba. However, we were not as impressed by the food as we had hoped. Still, it's a very nice place to eat. Fish fillet, \$11.50us; shrimp, \$14; pasta, \$5.25 to \$7; pork chop, \$8.50; poc chuc, \$9; tacos, \$6.50.

Sac-Be M3
Chicken at most restaurants in Coba is a thin, dry piece of grilled meat; Sac-Be was the only place that served us a chicken breast that was tender and juicy. When I asked if the salad was purified, the owner proudly showed me the bottle of purification solution that he used to wash vegetables. I was totally impressed with this tiny, rustic, roadside diner. Guacamole, \$3.25us; fish fillet, \$5.75; shrimp, \$8.50; lime soup, \$3.25; chicken, \$5.75; pork, \$5.75.

La Piramide M7

La Piramide offers a lunch buffet that is included with many group tours. This restaurant sits at the top of a hill and has a beautiful view overlooking the lake. Guacamole, \$5.75us; tacos, \$5.75; most meat dishes, \$7.50; fish fillet, \$10.50; shrimp, \$14.

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Caracol M12
Cocina del Campo M1
El Bocadito M5
El Faison M14
La Piramide M7
La Sazon M13
Lol-Ha M2
Loncheria Coba M8
Nicte-Ha M6
Postres y Pasteles M9
Sac-Be M3
Tortileña Amanda M9

Miscellaneous

Bus station M5
Cenotes See map O
Crocodile feeding M10
For \$5us a guide will walk to the dock and attract a crocodile with food. Strange, but you'll get a good photograph!

Drug store
Across from La Piramide, M7.

Transportation

TAXI
Available in the ruins parking lot, or in front of the bus station (M5).
To Valladolid \$30us
To Tulum \$30us

BUS
Bus station is located inside El Bocadito restaurant (M5).
To Valladolid 24 pesos (\$2.50us)
Departs at: 8am, 9:30am, 11am, noon, 1pm, & 7pm.
To Tulum 27 pesos (\$2.50us)
Departs at: 9:30am, 10:30am, 1:30pm, 3:30pm, 4pm, & 6pm.

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