



VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS



Viva la Vida
Exploring Frida Kahlo's Mexico City
with Dr. Sarah G. Powers, Exhibition Curator of *Frida: Beyond the Myth*
and Curatorial Research Specialist in American Art

January 10 – 16, 2026



Dear Friends,

To understand **Frida Kahlo**, you must go to **Mexico City**. Her home, her inspirations, her politics, her relationship with **Diego Rivera**—it's all there, embedded in the city's streets. As VMFA presents the exhibition *Frida: Beyond the Myth*, you're invited to join our immersive journey into Frida's Mexico City from **January 10 to 16, 2026**, accompanied by exhibition curator **Dr. Sarah G. Powers**.

Before the crowds arrive, we'll have exclusive before-hours access to **Casa Azul**, the house where she was born, painted, and—true to her word—never completely left. Stand in the studio where she painted *Viva la Vida* and *The Broken Column*, surrounded by the colors and objects she cherished. In *Frida: Beyond the Myth*, we're proud to exhibit snapshots of Frida at Casa Azul taken by famous friends such as Lola Álvarez Bravo and Nickolas Muray. This visit will make those iconic photographs even more vivid.

Our curator-led explorations continue at the **Museo Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo**, where Frida and Diego lived and worked in twin houses connected by a bridge. Here, she composed nearly 100 works in the mid-1930s, including *What the Water Gave Me* and *The Two Fridas*. Frida painted her private pain; Diego painted revolution through sprawling murals, which we'll see during private tours at the Palacio Nacional and the Secretaría de Educación Pública. A before-hours tour of the **Palacio de Bellas Artes** will bring us up close to Rivera's *Man at the Crossroads*, originally commissioned for Rockefeller Center.

Both Frida and Diego sought inspiration from Mexico's pre-Columbian heritage and muralist traditions. We'll venture just outside the city to **Teotihuacán**, strolling its legendary Avenue of the Dead with a historian to experience colorful murals and soaring pyramids. At Mexico City's **Museo de Antropología**, one of the world's most acclaimed museums, we'll have exclusive after-hours access to view its many Indigenous Mexican treasures away from the crowds.

Of course, we'll share exclusive cultural experiences highlighting Mexico City's complex heritage. Picture yourself floating through the canals of **Xochimilco** on a traditional *trajinera* with a private naturalist guide. On a privately guided tour of **Chapultepec Castle**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, we'll take in expansive views from North America's only royal palace.

TRAVELING WITH YOU



Dr. Sarah Powers is the exhibition curator for *Frida: Beyond the Myth* and serves as Curatorial Research Specialist in American Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Previously, she served as Curator of Special Projects at the Hood Museum of Art at

Dartmouth College, where she organized exhibitions and programs on Mexican Modernism, including *Men of Fire: José Clemente Orozco and Jackson Pollock*, a collaboration with the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Delaware and an M.A. from Williams College.

We'll stay in style at the luxurious **Four Seasons Mexico City** and savor Michelin-starred cuisine at **Filigrana**, enjoying a modern spin on classic Mexican flavors. **To reserve a place**, please contact our tour operator Arrangements Abroad at 212-514-8921 or trips@arrangementsabroad.com. I hope you'll join us as we explore the exciting city Frida loved.

With warm regards,

Adele "Hutch" Livingston
VMFA Coordinator of Member Travel

Activity Level:



Pace Level:



Visit Arrangements Abroad's website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs.

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Museo Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo, Mexico City

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10: DEPARTURE / MEXICO CITY

Depart from the United States and arrive in Mexico City before transferring to the Four Seasons. Enjoy time at leisure before coming together for a group dinner. D

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11: MEXICO CITY

Before the crowds arrive, enjoy exclusive morning access to **Casa Azul** (The Blue House), where Frida was born, created art, and died in 1954. Walk through rooms filled with her personal collection—from folk art to pre-Hispanic artifacts—that informed her singular style.

In her light-filled studio, see where she transformed private pain into visual language. Stand inches from works like *Viva la Vida* and *The Broken Column*, surrounded by the objects of her daily life: brushes, pigments, wheelchair, and the Tehuana dresses that helped define her public image.

Then continue on a private tour of the **Museo Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo**, where these two formidable artists worked under one roof. This functionalist complex, designed in 1931, features twin studios joined by a narrow bridge.

In these color-coded buildings—rust red for Diego, cobalt blue for Frida—she painted works such as *What the Water Gave Me* while he filled his sawtooth-roofed studio with *papier-mâché* figures and pre-Hispanic relics.

After lunch, join an expert for a private tour of **Casa Trotsky**, the fortified villa where Leon Trotsky spent his final years in exile. After surviving a machine-gun attack in May 1940, the modest compound was transformed into a high-security compound—with steel doors, lookout towers, and reinforced walls—thanks to the efforts of Kahlo and Rivera. Dinner this evening is at leisure. B,L

MONDAY, JANUARY 12: MEXICO CITY / TEOTIHUACÁN

Just outside Mexico City, visit **Teotihuacán**, once the largest and most powerful city in ancient North America. At its height—when Rome still ruled Europe—it held more than 125,000 residents. With an **archaeologist guide**, walk through this sprawling site and ascend the **Pyramid of the Sun**.

Follow the **Avenue of the Dead**, passing multi-family residential compounds built from volcanic stone. Stop to observe murals that have survived for nearly two millennia, featuring such imagery as jaguars mid-stride and eagles in flight

Enjoy lunch at a traditional *hacienda*, then return to the city for an afternoon at leisure. For those interested, join an optional excursion to **La Ciudadela**, the market originally established for the 1968 Summer Olympics. Wind through its maze of stalls to find textiles, folk art, and handcrafted goods from across Mexico. Dinner is at leisure. B,L



Teotihuacán



Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City



Independence angel, Zócalo, Mexico City

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13: MEXICO CITY

Enter Mexico's "Cathedral of Art," the **Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes** on a private, before-hours tour. Inside this splendid structure clad in white Carrara marble, murals by the leading voices of modern Mexican art await, including Diego Rivera's *Man at the Crossroads* and key works by José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Rufino Tamayo.

Continue your exploration of Rivera's vision across three locations. At the **Museo Mural Diego Rivera**, see *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in Alameda Park*, a 15-ton, 50-foot-long mural that survived the 1985 earthquake. Among its 150 historical figures, spot Frida Kahlo holding a yin-yang symbol, standing behind a young Diego.

At the **Palacio Nacional**, climb the grand staircase to view Rivera's sweeping mural chronicling Mexican history. In one panel, Frida appears again, depicted as a schoolteacher in Rivera's utopian Mexico. Conclude at the **Secretaría**

de Educación Pública, where Rivera painted more than 120 frescoes celebrating the dignity of rural labor and revolutionary ideals.

Then visit the **Zócalo**, once the ceremonial center of Tenochtitlan and now Mexico City's central plaza and the country's political and cultural gathering place. Observe how the mix of pre-Columbian ruins and colonial architecture informed Kahlo's visual language. Lunch follows, with views of the square's elaborate stonework and sculptural detail.

In the afternoon, take a **private tour** focused on Mexico City's Jewish heritage and Frida Kahlo's paternal lineage. While genealogical research has since complicated her claims, Frida professed Jewish ancestry throughout her life.

Learn how a Jewish community took root in Mexico city during the Inquisition and flourished through waves of immigration from Eastern Europe and the Levant. Gather for dinner this evening.

B,L,D



Diego Rivera, *Dream on a Sunday Afternoon in Alameda Park*, Museo Mural Diego Rivera, Mexico City

Chapultepec Castle, Mexico City



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14: MEXICO CITY

Begin with a private tour of **Chapultepec Castle**, the only true royal residence in North America. Built in 1785 as a retreat for the Spanish viceroy, this hilltop fortress later served as a military academy and the presidential residence. Here, Emperor Maximilian I and Empress Carlota once held court during their brief reign in the 1860s.

Set atop a volcanic outcrop sacred to the Aztecs, the castle offers commanding views over Mexico City. Inside, find rooms layered with history: Maximilian's carriage, lavish furnishings, and murals by David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco.

Next, visit the **Museo de Arte Moderno** for a guided tour with a museum curator. Get close to defining pieces of 20th-century Mexican art: Frida Kahlo's *Las Dos Fridas*, acquired from the artist in 1947; Rivera's intimate portraits; Orozco's *Las Soldaderas*; and surrealist visions by Remedios Varo.

This evening, enjoy an exclusive after-hours visit to the **Museo de Antropología**, home to one of the world's most important collections of Mesoamerican artifacts. The museum holds more than 600,000 objects from across Mexico's

indigenous civilizations, including treasures from Olmec, Maya, Zapotec, and Mexican cultures. A highlight is the **Aztec Sun Stone**, a 20-ton monolith carved with the solar face of Tonatiuh. Once buried beneath the city's central plaza, it now stands as Mexico's most iconic archaeological object.

Conclude the evening with a Michelin-starred dinner at **Filigrana**, with an exclusive greeting from the executive chef. This colorful tribute to Mexican culinary heritage includes dishes such as vampire ceviche (named for its red color and citrus-infused sorbet), *pozole brujo* (a spicy chicken soup), and street classics like the corn *gordita*. B,L,D

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15: MEXICO CITY

Explore **Xochimilco**, Mexico City's southernmost district, renowned for its UNESCO-listed canal system. Aboard a traditional *trajinera*—a brightly painted, flat-bottomed boat—join a private, naturalist-led tour of ancient *chinampas*, floating gardens engineered by the Aztecs.



Trajinera, Xochimilco



Aztec Sun Stone, Museo de Antropología, Mexico City

After lunch, enjoy a privately guided tour of **Museo Anahuacalli**, home to Diego Rivera's collection of pre-Hispanic art. Designed by Rivera and built from volcanic stone, the museum houses nearly 2,000 objects from civilizations including the Olmec, Toltec, Nahuatl, Zapotec, and the people of Teotihuacán and northeastern Mexico. Gather this evening for a festive farewell dinner. B,L,D

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16: MEXICO CITY / RETURN

After breakfast, transfer to the airport to return home. B

DISCLAIMER: This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms.

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ACCOMMODATIONS



The Four Seasons Hotel Mexico City

THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL MEXICO CITY

This luxurious hotel wraps around a lush interior courtyard, creating a calm center within the city's energy. Located on Paseo de la Reforma, it sits within easy reach of Chapultepec Park and the upscale neighborhoods of Roma and Condesa.

PROGRAM RATE

\$11,999 per person, double rate

\$13,999 single rate

RATES INCLUDE

- Six nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine and beer at all included lunches and dinners
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/hotel/airport transfers for participants on arrival and departure days
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

NOT INCLUDED IN RATES: International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for those arriving/departing outside of program dates; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included



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RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please call Arrangements Abroad at 212-514-8921 or 800-221-1944; email: trips@arrangementsabroad.com; fax: 212-344-7493; or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$2,000 per person (of which \$1,000 is non-refundable for administrative fees) payable to Arrangements Abroad. Mail to: Arrangements Abroad, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

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City

State

Zip

Telephone (home)

(business)

Fax

E-mail

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Room Preference ☐ One bed ☐ Two beds ☐ Single

I wish to share a room with _____

FORM OF PAYMENT

☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to Arrangements Abroad)

☐ Debit card ☐ Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

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Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date



VMFA

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Front cover: *Frida on White Bench, New York* (detail), 1939, Nickolas Muray (American, born Hungary, 1892–1965), carbon pigment print. Private Collection © Nickolas Muray Photo Archives, Licensed by Nickolas Muray Photo Archives. Highlights page: Museo Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo, Mexico City. Back cover: Palacio Nacional, Mexico City (top) and Teotihuacán (bottom).

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