

Monarchs of Michoacán

- **Where:** Michoacán, Mexico to visit the Monarch Butterfly Sanctuaries and Historic Cities of Morelia and Patzcuaro
 - **When:** December to mid-March
 - **Duration:** 8 Nights
 - **Accommodations:** Lodges & Hotels
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Morelia ~ Morelia is the capital of the Mexican state of Michoacán. The historic downtown area consists of about 150 blocks and contains over 1,000 historical buildings and sites. This unique area is now a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage Site. These sites are named for their exceptional cultural or natural importance to the general legacy of humanity. Morelia is known for its brilliant colonial structures and remarkable historical churches and boasts a perfect fusion of the Spanish Renaissance and a Mesoamerican experience. Each fragment of standing architecture celebrates the birthplace of many important players in Mexico's rich history.

Patzcuaro ~ the "city of stones," and the cultural and artisan Mecca of Mexico. It still holds its ancient feel with its patchy cobblestone streets and adobe buildings with red roofs; all of which are rich in Spanish colonial and indigenous culture. Set on the summit of an assembly of large rolling hills, overlooking Lake Patzcuaro, it is truly a place of vast beauty. The highlight of the city is Janitzio, an island in Lake Patzcuaro, which is overflowing with character and breathtaking views.



Reefs to Rockies



Day 1 – Arrival in Morelia

Transfer to Morelia and overnight at Hotel de la Soledad or similar.

Day 2 – Morelia

After a delicious breakfast at the hotel, you will meet your local guide who will usher you on a tour of the unique and historical city of Morelia, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Lunch to follow at a local restaurant. Next, you will visit the Morelia's famous candy museum and an artist's workshop. After such an exciting day, much deserved cocktails and refreshments will be served at the hotel. End the day with a lecture on monarch butterflies and dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Hotel de la Soledad or similar. (B,L,D)

Day 3 – Morelia

Today, you will visit the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Lunch will be provided at a local restaurant. You will have the evening to do what you choose including dining at the restaurant of your choice. Overnight at Hotel de la Soledad or similar. (B,L)

~The Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve spans almost 140,000 acres of rugged montane forests. Every fall, millions of monarchs arrive from North America to huddle in oyamel firs, painting the trees orange and bending branches with their weight. The monarchs fill the sky when they take flight, and make a sound like light rain with the beating of their wings. Witnessing this unique phenomenon is an exceptional experience of nature.

Day 4 – Morelia

After breakfast, you will set out for visits to additional monarch butterfly sanctuaries. The night is free to explore Morelia and a new restaurant for dinner. Overnight at Hotel de la Soledad or similar. (B,L)

Day 5 – Patzcuaro

After a hearty breakfast, you will depart for Patzcuaro, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. On the way, stop at Tzintzuntzan Archaeological Site to discuss local history, flora and fauna. Upon arrival in Patzcuaro, visit a mask-making workshop and take a city tour. Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight at Posada de Don Vasco or similar. (B,L,D)

Day 6 – Patzcuaro

Today, you will have a scenic boat tour on Lake Patzcuaro. Stop at Janitzio Island to visit a copper artisan's workshop and also at Yunuen Island to learn about indigenous community members and resident wildlife. Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight at Posada de Don Vasco or similar. (B,L,D)

Day 7 – Patzcuaro/Morelia

This morning, you will visit a local crafts market in Patzcuaro for shopping before returning to Morelia. An evening cocktail reception will be held at Hotel Virrey de Mendoza overlooking the cathedral, as well as a farewell dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Hotel Virrey de Mendoza. (B,D)

Day 8 – Morelia

Early morning transfer to Morelia International Airport for flight back to the U.S.

Land only pricing from \$1575 per person based on double occupancy.