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Travel • Up in the Air Life: Black professionals travel the world

Up in the Air Life: Black professionals travel the world

By Corbin White | November 13, 2015 |



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Before Mexico's Pacific Coast residents boarded up their homes and bought supplies to brace the inevitable arrival of Hurricane Patricia, a Category 5 "monster storm," there was calm.

After Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán, the infamous leader of the Sinaloa drug cartel, shook "the system" and escaped from a Mexican federal prison, there was controversy, but then there was calm.

Even after scraping off the party residue of entitlement leftover from Donald Trump's recent fealties and broadcast opinions of Mexico, there was calm. Patented with its controversy, and semi-elusive grandeur Mexico, bears a lot of things, and luxury is certainly one of them. Both ethnically and geographically, from the fiestas and festivals to the royally furnished resorts, travelers who are foreign to Mexico, are bound to experience a social adventure.

This has always been the goal of Up in the Air Life founder Clara Soares. The "upscale travel company boasts organized international jaunts for African-American vacationers to exotic locales like Cuba, Mexico, Colombia, Greece, Croatia and Thailand. Soares has affectionately dubbed her passionate LITAL travelers "Lifers." That time next year, in November of 2016, another diverse group of "Lifers" will embark on a journey to Egypt, Africa.

This year, Soares targeted Mexico for the travel group's meet up, which was kicked off with a night life stroll around the city of Playa del Carmen. RollingOut had a chance to catch up with the woman behind it all. Conveniently paired with the annual Mi Casa Es Su Casa Holiday event, a week-long house music festival consisting of mega concerts, incredible food and beach and pool parties all hours of the day and night.

The LITAL tour bus departed the following morning with a group trip to Chichen Itza in Cancun. Arguably the most important city of the Mayan Culture in the Yucatan peninsula, Chichen Itza has the largest and most breathtaking structures of any other Mayan ancient cities. Chichen Itza is also the largest and most impressive of the Mayan ruins, boasting mystical pyramids and ancient Aztec architecture. The Chichen-Itza (pronounced chee-chen eel-eh) in Maye, was a sacred city of the Itza and the name literally means: "Mouth of the well of the Itza."

Speaking of wells, one of the most profound activities of the LITAL Mexico meet up included a visit to the Yucatan Cenote, a spiritual and social staple of Mexico's land and heritage. The well-known hole, is located along the edges of Yucatan's thick forest growth and mangrove swamp, just north of Playa del Carmen in the Riviera Maya. Mayans used the cenote as a place to swim, pray and connect with the gods. With its approximately hundred fifty feet depth, the Yucatan cenote boasts mystical, swimming and worshipping pleasures. With a wave of his hands and channeling Spenglish, our tour guide broke down the history of the ancient Mayans (and the Gulf Coast's darker brown-skinned Mexicans) as we slowly approached the famous tourist attraction.

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UPLife was originally developed from Soerke's blog *Up in The Air*. From this blog, she birthed *Up in the Air Life*, and it continues to blossom, nurtured by like-minded wanderlust professionals of color. For more info and future travel plans, check out <http://www.upthelife.com>.



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