

# Central America by private aircraft

## CENAM 2017. Baja Bush Pilots trip story.

**Day 1.** Pushing the throttles forward eight aircraft departed out of Laredo Texas with a heading of 160 in route for Veracruz Mexico. Baja 1. Jack McCormick is out front leading the Baja Bush Pilots CENAM 2017. This is one of the eight organized group trips each year the Baja Bush Pilots put together. On this trip, All types of aircraft as well as both first time and experienced south of the border flyers are assigned call signs for the trip. Baja 1-Baja 8) .

The Baja Bush Pilots literally wrote the book on flying Mexico and Central America by publishing the 28th edition of Airports of Mexico and Central America flying guide.



Short final. Veracruz MX.



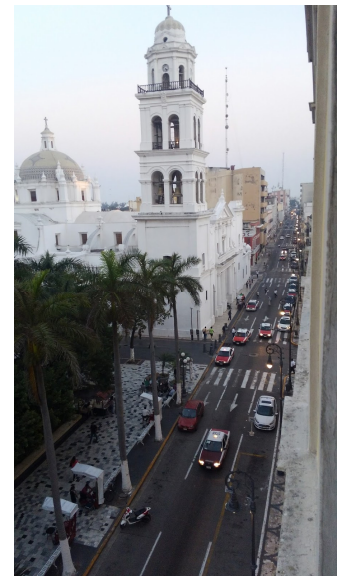
DGAC Paperwork

**Veracruz México.** An airport of entry with 100ll fuel. Paperwork is completed and off to the hotel \$10. US taxi ride to the “Gran Hotel Diligencias”. Some explore the markets and local attractions in this busy traditional Mexican town.



Airports of Mexico and Central America Flying Guide.

**Day 2-3. Veracruz México.** Extremely high winds blowing at 40-50 knots create an opportunity for an extra day of exploring as we all agree to stay on the ground and not fly. The next morning the winds have died down and we are set to move south. Full fuel tanks and paperwork complete we push the throttles forward again for Flores Guatemala.



Town of Veracruz MX.

**Guatemala.** Descending over Lago Peten Itza in route for **Mundo Maya International** after a 2.5 hour flight the small island town of Flores is a spectacular sight. Mundo Maya international has no 100ll fuel but does have friendly customs and flight services. This airport is the primary airport for those wanting to see the Tikal Ruins. A \$1.00 (one dollar) US ride to town in a three wheel taxi to the island city of Flores. This city now has a causeway but is still considered an island city by most. The people here are warm and friendly. I tried to give the taxi driver a \$5.00 U.S. for the ride from the airport to the hotel and he said no.. after talking to him he said that was just way too much and was extremely happy with the \$2.00 us we settled on.



CENAM 2017 MGTK Mundo Maya Intl. Straight in Final

Short final for Mundo Maya international





Exploring the jungles of Tikal



Baja Bush Pilots on top!



Note. U.S money will work fine only if the paper has no rips, tears or folds and looks pristine. A tiny fold or tear will make your money useless. If you want to be a hero simply tell the manager of the hotel you are willing to trade his bad bills for your pristine bills and return to the states. Normally you will find they have 3-4 bills sitting in a drawer that will not work in Guatemala but will work fine in the US. \$20. Bills are the most concern of the locals and some banks will not exchange them due to high levels of counterfeit \$20. Bills.

**Day 4. Tikal Guatemala ruins.** The group boards a private bus to explore the amazing Tikal Ruins “A city of ancient Maya Civilization”. Tikal is a large archaeological site in Guatemala, the largest excavated site in the Americas. It is Guatemala’s most famous cultural and natural preserve, and is located in the department (state) of El Petén. Baja Bush Pilots explore and spend the day taking in the site in its totality.



\$1.00 US taxi to town

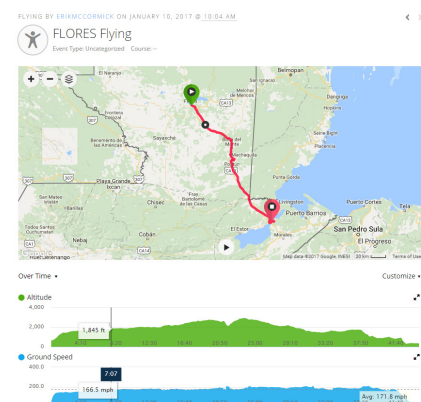
Day 5. Departing Mundo Maya International for a private jungle strip in Dulce Guatemala. We decide to stay under the cloud layer and follow only highway in the area. The pilots on the trip indicate “this is real flying” as we make our way to along the jungle covered terrain. In route, With permission we do a low pass at the controlled airstrip of Potun. Potun is halfway between Rio Dulce and Maya Mundo. Landing at the Rio Dulce private strip we are met by secu

Rio  
the





rity guards and a tractor to help haul luggage. A boat takes us to the Catamaran Hotel owned by a Baja Bush Pilots member that always goes out of his way to take care of the group. After exploring the hotel island we board a launch to explore the local attractions. "Castillo De San Felipe de Lara" is a Spanish colonial fort at the entrance to Lake Izabal and is connected with the Caribbean sea.



**Day 6. Departing Rio Dulce** in route for Guatemala city, Aeropuerto Internacional La Aurora we take on fuel and park the aircraft in secure parking. We have lunch at the private flying club looking over the runway and meet new flying friends. The group makes quick drink and snack run and board a bus to the remote mountain pueblo of Chichicastenango. "Chi chi" (as referred to by locals) is known for its open air market and indigenous Maya culture. 16th Century churches used for worship and maya rituals are explored by the Baja Bush Pilots.

We always stay at the Mayan Inn. Push a button and a person will be at your door to light a fire or get you anything you desire. The market is only open on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Mostly textiles Many of the Baja Bush Pilots show up for the happy hour and dinner wearing traditional clothing and even a few machetes. A earthquake late one night sent

me running into the hallway half dressed to see open sky and presumed safety only to find the locals snickering at my actions as I realized I was in no danger and the earthquakes are from the live volcano near Guatemala City. This is the formal final dinner for the group as we all have new found friends.

Day 7. Departing down the hill we see a live volcano blowing smoke and we are passed by a "chicken bus" full of locals and livestock. In route to Guatemala city we discuss flying north options and all are dreaming of a Cheeseburger in paradise. Ending the trip most fly out the next day and some stay for a week exploring new locations. All that attended will have memories that last a lifetime. Phone numbers and hugs are exchanged and promises of more south of the border flying are made in the group as we say "adios amigos" till next time.



For information regarding flying general aviation aircraft over international borders visit [www.bajabushpilots.com](http://www.bajabushpilots.com)

Airports of Mexico flying guide. Available at [www.bajabushpilots.com](http://www.bajabushpilots.com) store.

EAPIS. Baja Bush Pilots Simplify s eAPIS into 7 steps.

EAPIS. Advance Passenger Information System. Private Aircraft Reporting Requirements for Arriving or Departing United States. Agency. Department of Homeland Security.

The Baja Bush Pilots have created an a "simplified eAPIS" process. Members have indicated this process is much simpler for many reasons.

Story by Erik McCormick.

Trip guide and volunteer for the BBP.

Baja Bush Pilots contact information.

480-730-3250

Erik or Jack @bajabushpilots.com

Upcoming Baja Bush Pilot trips.

Kiss a Whale 2017. Sold out. Feb 2017 50 aircraft. Loreto, Baja MX.

Cuba by private aircraft. Open March-April 2017

Explore The best of Baja Golf. Tentative. 2017

Explore - Under the Sea. Diving the Sea of Cortez. Tentative 2017

CENAM 2018. January 2018.

Kiss a Whale 2018. Feb 2018.

