

Chichen Itza

Temple of the Warriors

A large, stepped pyramid with rows of columns sculpted to look like warriors, and other columns like serpents.

At the top of the staircase, in front of the temple at the top, is a chacmool.



chacmool - reclining man

Cenote Sagrado

This is a natural sink hole, 60 metres across and surrounded by cliffs 27 metres above the water.

Thousands of objects such as shell, jade, wood, obsidian (black glass), cloth and gold as well as human skeletons have been found at the bottom.

It was a place of pilgrimage as well as somewhere to sacrifice victims on occasion!



La Iglesia

A rectangular building with a single room inside. It has very detailed carvings including a mark of the god Chac sticking out on all four corners.

Other carvings include an armadillo, a snail, a turtle and a crab.

According to Maya mythology these animals hold up the sky.

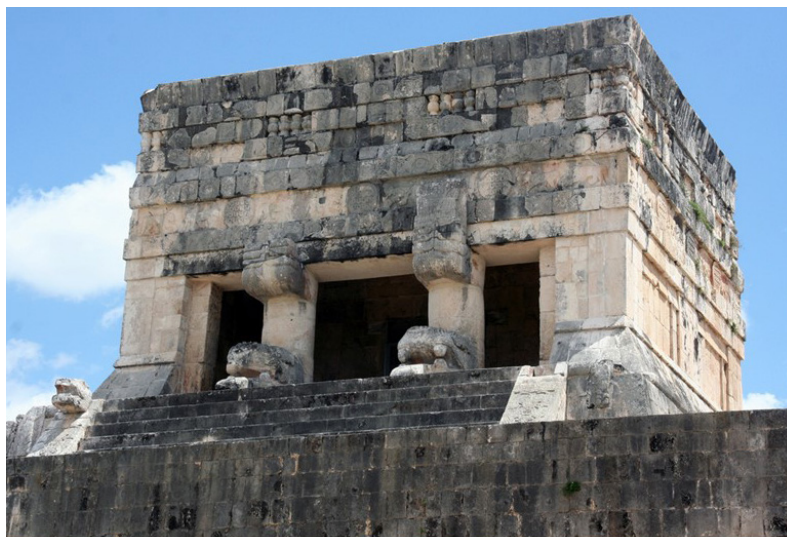
This intricately carved building was drawn by Frederick Catherwood when he explored the ruins in 1839.



There are various stone platforms at Chichen Itza, probably used as podiums for rituals, ceremonies or dances.

The Venus Platform

- This one is known as the Venus Platform.
- The skull of a decapitated man was found on the stairway!
- It was originally painted in ochre, blue, red, green and black.
- You can see carvings of the planet Venus and Kukulkan (the serpent bird man).



Platform of the Eagles and Jaguars

- This platform has carvings of eagles and jaguars eating human hearts.
- They represent the warriors who captured the victims for sacrificing to the gods.
- The eagle knights were archers and the jaguar knights fought with wooden clubs tipped with slices of glass.



Tzompantli or The Wall of Skulls

- The heads of sacrificial victims were placed on this platform.
- As well as the wall of skulls, there are also carvings showing a human sacrifice, eagles eating human hearts and skeleton warriors with shields and arrows.

