

# The HBX Group

## Think Big Project



## Community tourism

*Community-based tourism according to the United Nations is defined as a model of tourism management that places local communities at the centre of the process. It directly involves local communities in decision-making and ensures that the benefits are distributed among them, ensuring that they invest in improving the quality of life of their inhabitants, as well as in infrastructures for natural and cultural preservation.*

*This generates increased wealth, wellbeing and hope for the future in the communities, as well as avoiding depopulation, delinquency and extreme poverty. Many of the cooperatives train people from the community to offer them employment in the future or to encourage them to start new social tourism businesses, and they also create a precedent and serve as an example of good practice for present and future generations.*

*At the same time, community-based tourism opens the doors not only to the tourist, but also to the community, which means that they carry out joint activities with the aim of transmitting traditions, culture and knowledge, as well as making them value their biodiversity and nature.*

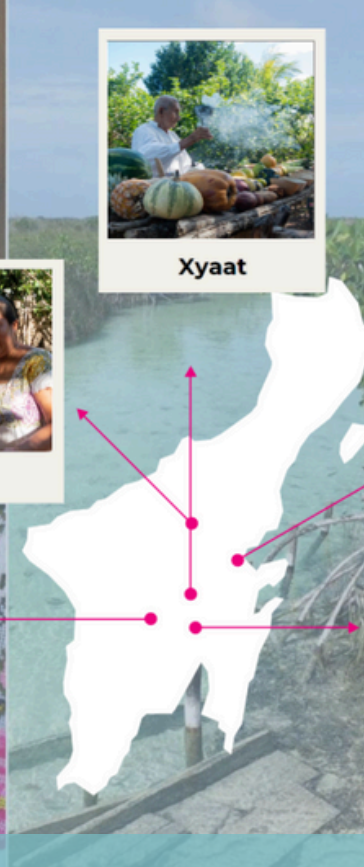
*As such, this type of travel fosters a deeper understanding and respect between visitors and local communities. It provides a sustainable alternative to mass tourism by developing tourism practices that minimise negative environmental impact, while promoting economic development and social inclusion within the community. More than 80% of the territory is rural, and 84% of people living in extreme poverty are in these areas, so it is important to collaborate with them and diversify the tourism offer in a sustainable and responsible way.*

*Community-based tourism is designed for a traveller seeking a real experience, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the culture, traditions and way of life of the host community. Activities can include traditional craft workshops, music and dance performances, culinary experiences and nature activities... The traveller should know that adaptability and respect are fundamental to live this type of experience and that each culture has its own peculiarities that must be accepted, cared for and valued.*

*One example of the great work of community-based tourism is "Caminos Sagrados" (Sacred Paths), dedicated to the conservation of Mayan culture, in the Maya Ka'an region.*



# MAYA KA'AN



Xyaat



U belilek



Kíichpam K'áax



Community Tours  
Sian Ka'an



Sijil Noh Ha

## WHERE THE EARTH BEATS

**MAYA KA'AN** an exemplary ecotourism destination located in the Mexican Caribbean. It stands out for its combination of community and sustainable tourism.

Maya Ka'an rises as a paradigm of sustainable tourism, promoting a new model of community development. Just two hours south of Cancun, this paradise offers majestic natural surroundings, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the authenticity of the Mayan culture.

Deeply rooted in the heritage of this ancient civilisation, Maya Ka'an is a hidden treasure that encompasses a vast expanse of jungles, lagoons, cenotes and archaeological sites, offering visitors a fascinating journey into the past and a connection to local biodiversity.

It promotes sustainable tourism practices that benefit local communities. Many of the region's tourism activities are run by these communities, providing visitors with authentic cultural experiences while supporting the local economy.

Visitors can participate in traditional Mayan activities such as spinning cotton or enequen, collecting the gum used to make chewing gum or sugar cane, and learning to cook traditional food, among many others.

This form of tourism guarantees the conservation of cultural heritage and natural resources for future generations.

Maya Ka'an is not just a tourist destination but a transformative experience that allows visitors to reconnect with nature, appreciate the cultural richness of the Mayan civilisation and contribute to the sustainable development of local communities.



## "A JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF THE MAYAN CULTURE".

**"CAMINOS SAGRADOS"** (Secret Path) is a community based tourism network within the Maya Ka'an region to promote community development and biodiversity conservation in the heart of Quintana Roo, Mexico.

It is a collaborative effort involving Mayan communities, local government agencies, national associations and international foundations. The project focuses on providing holistic and immersive experiences that highlight the unique aspects of the region's Mayan cultural and natural heritage, while supporting conservation efforts in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve.

Caminos Sagrados promotes sustainable development by generating income for local communities through tourism, protecting natural resources through authentic and environmentally friendly tourism experiences, and ensures the continuity of traditional practices by encouraging environmental and cultural education for the children and youth of these communities.

It offers a wide range of experiences to its visitors, such as the observation of its incredible fauna from birds, manatees, crocodiles to dolphins. Visiting their milpa to learn about the food that comes from their land, touring the biosphere reserve of Sian Kan and swimming in its millenary canals. Learn about the ancestral production of chewing gum and cotton, or its indigenous medicinal heritage with traditional medicine, among many other things.

Caminos Sagrados is a shining example of how tourism can be harnessed to support community development, cultural conservation and environmental sustainability.

## XYAAT

In the community of Señor, in the heart of the Mayan zone of Quintana Roo, is located the Xyaat cooperative. Made up of locals who aim to rescue and preserve knowledge, legacies and traditions from the Mayan ancestors. They promote experiences to shed light on the local culture through environmental education programs and knowledge transfer to the children in their community as well as visitors who learn about traditional artisan techniques and the importance of looking after nature and biodiversity.



## COMMUNITY TOURS

Community Tours Sian Ka'an, a community enterprise located at 20 minutes from Tulum, Quintana Roo, offers ecotourism experiences in the surroundings of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, combining nature, adventure and culture. It offers visitors the unique opportunity to enjoy boat tours from the Muyil lagoon system to the mouth of the Caribbean Sea, while enjoying the fauna and flora as well as archaeological sites.

## U BELILEK

U belilek Kaxtik Kuxtal, or 'The way to search for our existence' is a cooperative in the community of Tihosuco. Between Valladolid and Felipe Carrillo Puerto. A community known for its deep-rooted history with the Caste War. Founded with the objective of creating sources of employment in the community, making sustainable use of the cultural heritage and improving the quality of life of its inhabitants through community tourism.



## KÍICHPAMK'ÁAX

The ecotourism center KíichpamK'áax in Mayan, Selva Bonita in Spanish ('Beautiful Forest'), is located 10 kilometers from the town of Chunhuhub, in the municipality of Felipe Carrillo Puerto. Visitors can experience living by nature, respecting and preserving the environment and the Mayan cultural identity through responsible and sustainable eco-tourism services and activities. Selva Bonita is a natural paradise, a place to meet and learn about the Mayan traditions.

## SIJIL NOH HA

Síjil Noh Há, meaning "where the great water is born" in Maya, is a sustainable tourism community enterprise located in Ocom, near Felipe Carrillo Puerto. This project aims to offer visitors adventure and education while promoting conservation of the natural and cultural richness of the area. Situated within the Much Kanan Ka'ax reserve, the centre spans 1,230 hectares and focuses on protecting endangered species and biodiversity.

