

# Uxmul Ruins

*Uxmal, Chaac's home, Puc remains pure and true, Rain brings life anew.*

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## Distinctive Mayan Puuc Architecture

Uxmul is a large site with well preserved ruins. It's easily one of the best Mayan architectural sites. Other architectural sites in the Yucutan, such as the ruins at Chichen Itza, are patchworks of architectural styles, but at Uxmul, all the architecture is distinctively and purely Mayan Puuc style. Puuc style buildings have smooth low walls, and facades with intricate geometric carvings. Uxmul is an excellent place to do a deep dive into the Puuc style.

The region where Uxmal is located suffers from a lack of rain sometimes. To help with the water issue, the people of Uxmal worshipped Chaac, the Mayan god of rain, lightning and storms. Many images of him can be found throughout the city. Chaac carries around snakes and jade axes that he uses to

throw at clouds to produce rain. The long nosed face of Chaac is featured on all 4 of the temples at the 74 Room Nuns Quadrangle. His face appears again at the Palacio del Gobernador. The doorway to the oval shaped Magician's Temple once again features the face of Chaac. The city also developed a complex system of reservoirs for catching and storing rain. It's possible that the city fell out of favour with Chaac, or should have built more reservoirs, because a drought is thought to have contributed to the eventual decline of this once thriving city.

Important monuments at Uxmul include:

**El Castillo:** El Castillo, or "The Castle," is the main structure at the Uxmul ruins and is a 15-meter (49 ft) tall pyramid-shaped temple. It is believed to have been used for religious ceremonies and is a popular tourist attraction today.

**The Temple of the Jaguars:** The Temple of the Jaguars is a small temple located at the site and is notable for its relief carvings of jaguars.

**The Temple of the Macaws:** The Temple of the Macaws is a small temple located at the site and is notable for its relief carvings of macaws.

**The Temple of the Sun:** The Temple of the Sun is a small temple located at the site and is notable for its relief carvings of the sun god.

**The Observatory:** The Observatory is a small structure located at the site and is believed to have been used for astronomical observations. It is notable for its intricate stucco relief carvings.