



# MEXICO

## Mystical Migration of the Monarch

*with Gustafson Photo Safari*

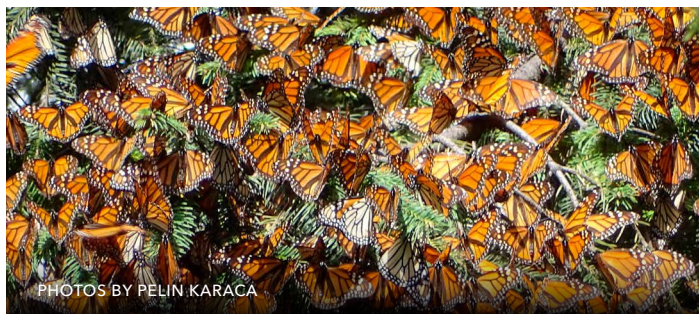
**MARCH 1 – 6, 2023**

# GPS

Monarch butterflies have a fascinating life story. They winter in the high mountains of central Mexico and migrate to Canada for the summer. It's a compelling story that takes five generations to complete. Each new generation flies further north, laying eggs that hatch the beautiful green, black, yellow, and white striped caterpillars which in turn form the iconic gold-ringed green chrysalis from which the new monarch butterflies hatch. The last generation will make the complete journey back to the mountains in Mexico to winter in the forests. It is this natural wonder that we will be filming and photographing high in the mountains of southern Mexico at the ends of the Earth. The sights and sounds of 100 million butterflies at first light is something I have dreamed of since I was a little boy! Join Gustafson Photo Safari for this slice of natural history: the Monarch Migration! With tips, techniques and personal instruction from a top digital photography expert, Todd Gustafson, you will return with an amazing portfolio of colorful images and a new sense of wonder about butterflies.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit two different monarch reserves on foot or horseback, where millions of individual monarch butterflies gather each winter.
- Photograph the dramatic colors of the butterflies as they hang in clusters from the trees, drink from streams, feed on wildflowers, and soar in the air above.
- Immerse yourself in the delicate sound of butterfly wings as tens of thousands of monarchs take flight when the sun emerges.
- Understand the story behind every photograph with site lectures on local wildlife, traditions, and history.
- Discuss results of applied techniques and present suggestions during evening feedback sessions.



PHOTOS BY PELIN KARACA





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## ITINERARY

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### DAY 1 | WED | 01 MAR | MEXICO CITY

Depart from the U.S. and arrive in Mexico City. Upon arrival, we will be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel. This evening, orientation and Welcome dinner at hotel.

DINNER

ZÓCALO CENTRAL HOTEL

### DAY 2 | THU | 02 MAR | ANGANGUEO

This morning have breakfast at the hotel and then walking tour of the main plaza and cathedral for photography. Check-out of the hotel and depart for Angangueo stopping for lunch en route. Check-in at Don Bruno and this afternoon walking tour of town.

BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER

HOTEL DON BRUNO

### DAY 3 | FRI | 03 MAR | ANGANGUEO

This morning, visit Sierra Chincua Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary. This is one of several nearby monarch sites and is more isolated than

El Rosario, which we will visit tomorrow. The journey starts with a hike up the mountain to about 10,000 feet. Horses are included as part of your program, but they cannot go all the way and some walking will still be required, but it can be done at your own pace and with stops and rest as needed. Once at the site, you have the day to enjoy and photograph the spectacular colony. Additionally, there is a nearby stream where the butterflies may fly at midday to drink water. At this time of year, they may take flight for an hour



PHOTO BY PELIN KARACA



or more for water, nectar, etc., before returning to their roost on the tree limbs or trunks. Please note that restrooms are located at the bottom of the mountain and not in the reserve. You will have a short time to buy souvenirs at the craft market at the bottom of the mountain. We will return to our hotel in the late afternoon. Lunch will be provided by the local community as a box lunch.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**HOTEL DON BRUNO**



#### DAY 4 | SAT | 04 MAR | ANGANGUEO

Today we will visit the monarch sanctuary of El Rosario, the largest overwintering site. The colony normally contains well over 100 million adult monarchs. An excellent trail system winds through the fir-covered slopes on which the colony is located. The hike to reach the colony may again reach up to 10,000 feet and will require hiking up the mountain. A portion of the hike can again be done by horseback. Rental of the horses are included in your program cost. Once at the site, the day will be spent enjoying the colony. We will have a picnic lunch provided by the local community. Restrooms are located at the bottom of the mountain and not in the reserve.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**HOTEL DON BRUNO**

#### DAY 5 | SUN | 05 MAR | MEXICO CITY

Have breakfast at the hotel, then head toward Mexico City via Piedra Herrada Reserve. Stop along the road that runs by the reserve, where a water source attracts monarchs and we can



photograph the river effect. Please note that we will not be visiting the reserve but just accessing the road next to it for the best photography opportunities. Afterward, enjoy quesadillas for lunch at a local restaurant, then make the return trip to Mexico City and our hotel on the Zócalo. Gather for a farewell dinner at the hotel's restaurant, with views overlooking the main plaza and the Cathedral.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**ZÓCALO CENTRAL HOTEL**

#### DAY 6 | MON | 06 MAR | DEPART

Breakfast will be included depending on your departure time. Airport shuttle service transfers are included and will be coordinated based on flight times. Check-out time at 12 pm.

**BREAKFAST**

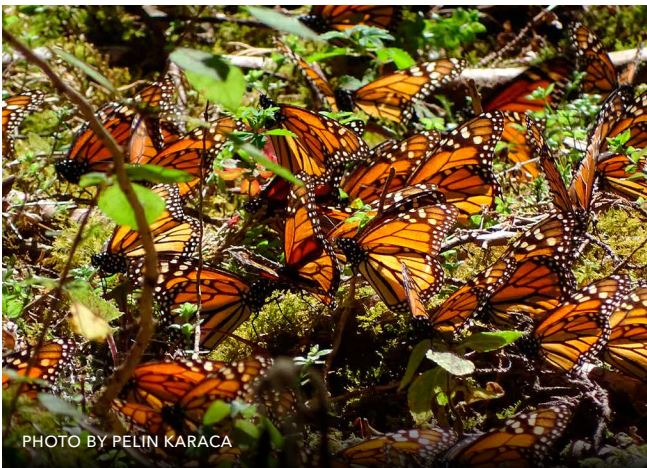


## ABOUT YOUR LEADER



**Todd Gustafson** is a professional nature photographer and founder of Gustafson Photo Safari. Todd grew up in Tanzania and has won numerous photography awards. His work has been featured in many international publications and museum exhibits, including a display in a permanent exhibit in the Smithsonian Institution Museum of Natural History, publications by the

United Nations, and product guides for NIKON Corporation, where he works as a clinician/teacher. Todd is also a highly accomplished trumpet player and has degrees in music education and trumpet performance.



## PRICING DETAILS

**\$3,995**

### Price includes:

- Accommodations, meals, and activities as described, including entrance fees
- Non-alcoholic beverages with meals
- Full-time guide for duration of the program
- Private vehicle transportation and driver
- All gratuities except main guide
- Departure tax
- Carbon offset

Price does not include: international airfare, travel/ trip cancellation insurance, gratuities for main guide, drinks purchased on own, passport or visa fees, or items of a personal nature.

## THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on a minimum of 5 participants in double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip, add \$500 per person. A \$1,000 per person non-refundable deposit is necessary to confirm a booking. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Cancellations received less than 95 days prior to departure are not refundable.

Please note: Your participation as a traveler indicates acceptance of Holbrook Travel's COVID-19 protocols in place at time of travel.

Holbrook Travel strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance for medical emergencies while traveling and to protect your investment. Please note the purchase of Cancel for Any Reason Coverage or to exclude pre-existing conditions with Trip Cancellation coverage may require policy purchase within 10-14 days of your initial deposit, depending upon the provider.

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

This is an active adventure in high-altitude conditions (over 10,000 feet). Participants should be in good health and able to hike for a distance of 2-3 miles to the colony site and then back the same way (could be around 5 miles of hiking in one day). Typically, the hike takes between one and two hours, but the colony site varies throughout the season, so hiking times and distances may vary.



*This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at [holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe](https://holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe)*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO ENROLL:

**TODD GUSTAFSON** | [gustaphoto@aol.com](mailto:gustaphoto@aol.com) | [gustafsonphotosafari.net](https://gustafsonphotosafari.net)

**PELIN KARACA** | [peлин@holbrooktravel.com](mailto:peлин@holbrooktravel.com) | [holbrook.travel/gustafson-mx23](https://holbrook.travel/gustafson-mx23)