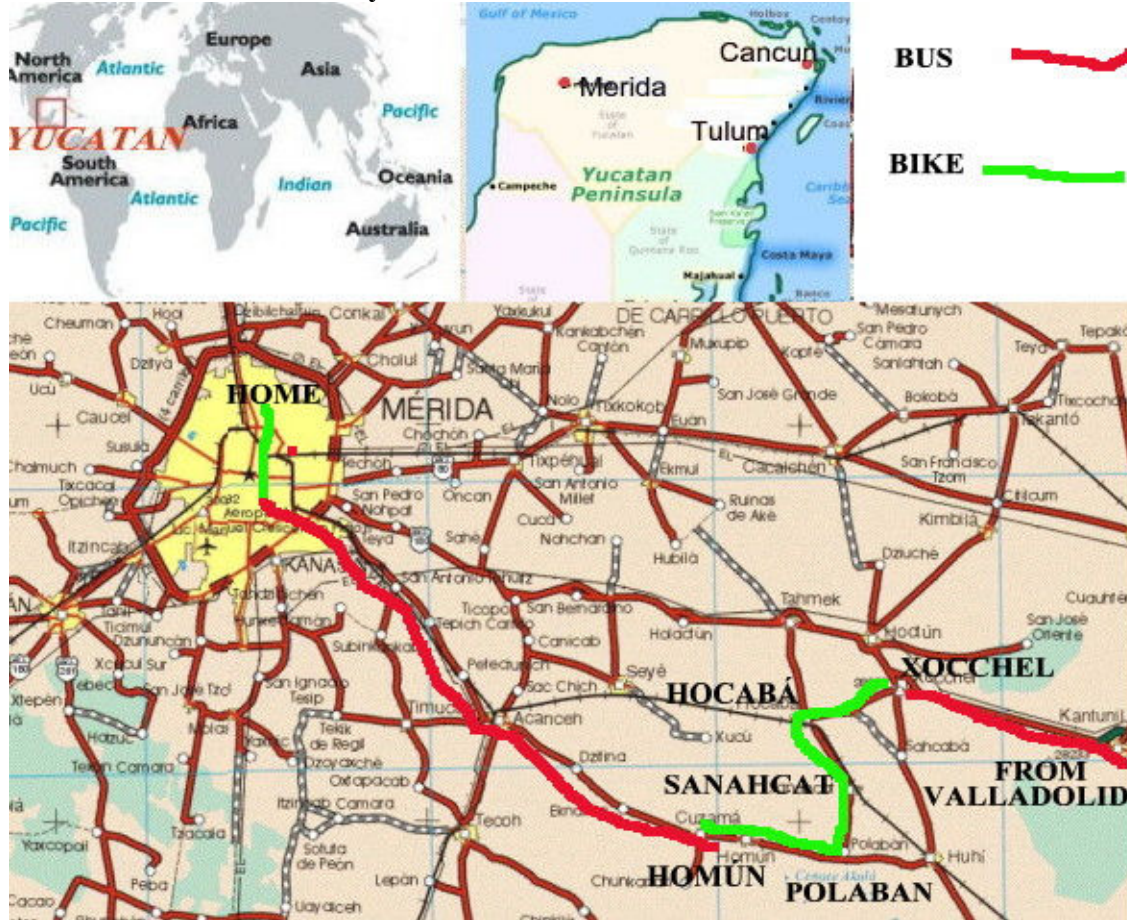


BIKE TRIP TO XOCHEL, HOMÚN AND POINTS IN BETWEEN TOLD WITH CAPTIONED PHOTOS by John M. Grimsrud



After another filling and satisfying breakfast at the municipal market in Valladolid we boarded the bus bound westerly in the direction of Mérida and disembarked at the seldom visited modest little town of Xocchel.



Civic pride doesn't seem to be abounding by the unpainted unkempt appearance of the Xocchel municipal building.



Across the dusty plaza from the municipal building stands a large west facing church devoid of outward adornments and inside is this curious side altar with green crosses.



“ A bicyclers dream come true” this narrow little seldom traveled road first took us to Hocabá where we procured a quarter kilo of hot tortillas to savor with our morning coffee.

Next appeared Sanahcat and still a conspicuous lack of motor vehicles made our tour worth the effort.



Check out the road width of the main highway from Xocchel on the way to Polaban...it is all of two meters wide and had virtually no traffic...bikers paradise.



Little Polaban has a little chapel. Originally this little settlement was a henequen producing hacienda but that died away some twenty years ago.



Amazingly the tropical vegetation has in twenty years reached out to pull this old henequen hacienda back to the earth.

When we witness this rapid flora invasion it always amazes us that the ancient Mayan ruins have stood up as well as they have to nearly five centuries of neglect.



Not so very long ago this rusted machinery was humming along driven by steam power generated by the burning native wood. Every aspect of human intervention in yucatan has had an immense impact upon deforestation.



Almost a ghost town, poor nearly forgotten little Polaban has faded into the spirit world. This has been place congers up a mystical speculation of thriving times in days gone by.

Above the once elegant owners mansion is little more that rubble that now only serves as a photo curiosity.



From the Polaban mansion steps the view of a former central plaza makes for a lovely bicycle trail interlude.



The view from the mansion steps of the massive henequen processing plant is nearly swallowed by the encroaching jungle and only the roof and smokestack can be seen.



Under the shade of a kind old tree we hydrate and savor our tortillas, eating light because too much food only makes us think of our hammocks and siesta time.



At Homún the afternoon heat of the tropical sun persuaded us to board the bus for home.

This is the city center and the church is the end product of yet another Mayan temple recycled into a cathedral.



Homún at least has enough city pride to paint and maintain their municipal building.

The winter season in Yucatán brings clear skies and parched earth that makes it semi-arid most of the year so that is why afternoons are made especially for hammocks hung in the shade.



Our bicycles are folded and ready to load aboard the next bus to Mérida.

An hour later, we are bicycling the streets of Mérida.

On the way home we stop at our favorite coffee shop, Caffé latté to enjoy a frozen coffee frappe and let the shadows get just a little longer.

We have to give a special thanks to some fine bicycling friends of ours that recommended two of the fabulous routes we enjoyed on this lovely cross Yucatán tour.

Check out the web-site of Basil and Alixa to learn more about touring this unique end of the world with excellent tour guides at; www.bikemexico.com