Please join Cathi and Steven House from May 25 to June 30, 2017 in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico to participate in their Study Abroad Program, CASA, the Center for Architecture Sustainability + Art
Located in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of San Miguel de Allende, CASA is the realization of a dream years in the making. Established as a study abroad program and retreat center by San Francisco architects, Cathi and Steven House, the Center is a link between the past and the future of architecture and a way of making the environment a more thoughtful and sustainable place. Cathi and Steven are working diligently and artfully as architects, painters, sculptors and educators to craft soulful buildings to advance a process of thinking that enriches the human spirit. Their goal is to instill in students a holistic view of what it truly means to be an architect, to help them gain a deep understanding of and develop skills for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world. In an environment of lively debate, immersed in analytical design exercises, field trips and theoretical discourse, students will find their voices as thoughtful designers able to articulate their individual agendas to guide them toward their professional careers.

San Miguel
-- Guided Tour of Historic Center
-- Tour of House + House projects
-- Tour of Fabrika Aurora
-- Renacimiento Visit

CASA
-- Design Charrettes
-- Apprenticeships with craftsmen
-- Sketching
-- Group Projects
-- Final Exhibition of student work

Mexico City
-- Guided tour of Historic Center
-- Barragan Houses & Chapel
-- Pyramids of Teotihuacán
-- Diego Rivera & Frida Kahlo Houses
-- National Center for the Arts
-- Anthropological Museum
-- Loganrota Architects Office Visit

Guanajuato
-- Diego River Home & Museum
-- Teatro Juarez
-- Museo de los Mornias
-- La Valenciana Mine
-- Mercado Hidalgo

Atotonilco
There is a rich experience awaiting you in the historic city of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico. Recently designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, his beautiful town, rich in history, 17th century architecture, ornate cathedrals and charming cobblestone streets, offers the allure of a place not to be missed and never to be forgotten. Nestled in the heartland of central Mexico in the state of Guanajuato, this charming colonial city sits at an elevation of 6,400 feet on a vast plateau of rolling hills in the Sierra Madre mountain range. This beautifully preserved 470-year-old colonial city is considered by many to be one of the most picturesque towns in Mexico. Long known as an artists colony, San Miguel offers an extraordinary array of concerts, theater, and lectures as well as language and art classes. It has two famous art and language institutes, the Bellas Artes cultural center and the Instituto Allende. Other important buildings include the Biblioteca Pública, a privately funded public library, the Teatro Santa Ana showing foreign language films, and the Angela Peralt Theater hosting performances by world renowned artists, lectures and folkloric ballet.
Mexico City, nestled at 7,400 feet above sea level into a dry lake bed, surrounded by magnificent mountains and flanked by two vast volcanoes that soar to 16,000 feet, sits on the ruins of the ancient Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan. This vibrant, elegant and charismatic city, home to more than 20 million inhabitants, is irresistible. Founded more than 650 years ago, remarkable remains of excavated pyramids, ornate colonial mansions, broad boulevards, bold public art, incomparable contemporary architecture and some of the best museums in the world are laced into parks and gardens, alive with a street life unequalled in Latin America. The vast open space of the Zocalo is said to be the second largest public square in the world. It is the city's political and religious center, bordered by the enormous Metropolitan Cathedral, the largest church in the western hemisphere, and Cortes' Palacio Nacional, still the seat of power, filled with Rivera murals. This beating heart of the city is built on the devastated remains of the magnificent temple complex of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan. As the center of power of pre-Hispanic America, the Teotihuacan, Toltec, Aztec and then the Spanish conquistadors all contributed to the city's fascinating evolution, heritage, art and architecture. The extraordinary ruins of the Templo Mayor pulse with the pounding drums of living Aztec dancers, healers offering smoke cures and organ grinders, all interspersed with bold contemporary architecture from the likes of Barragan, Norten, de Leon and Legorretta.
For 30 years House + House Architects have crafted intimate, personal architecture. Through careful analysis, Cathi and Steven House mold each project into a unique, magical and harmonious environment. Deeply sensitive to form, color, natural light, and movement, they create a tangible spirit within each project, molded to the process of living. Their diverse body of work in California, Mexico, and the Caribbean reflects their passion for site specific, well choreographed buildings. They have received over 50 design awards and have been featured in numerous publications including two monographs, "House + House Architects: Choreographing Space" and "Houses in the Sun: light movement embrace". Cathi and Steven have lectured extensively throughout the United States and Mexico. Dedicated to continuing education through travel, Steven and Cathi acknowledge the profound influence their exposure to cultures around the world has had on their work. They have traveled extensively in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America documenting vernacular architecture. Their stunning book, "Mediterranean Villages: An Architectural Journey", celebrates their investigations of hilltowns in central Italy, the Aegean Islands of Greece, the Dalmatian coast, and Andalusia in southern Spain. In 1989 while searching for a stone quarry in Mexico, Steven and Cathi discovered the historic town of San Miguel de Allende. That was the beginning of a love affair with a place that has offered them new opportunities in the refinement of their craft. They built a home for themselves in San Miguel in 1993 and have since designed over 20 houses in Mexico.
Center for Architecture Sustainability + Art
Located in the historic center of San Miguel de Allende, a series of four buildings are woven into gardens, courtyards and terraces to accommodate studio space for students. The buildings and the exterior spaces are flexible to serve a wide variety of uses. With careful consideration given to the movement of the sun throughout the seasons, this sustainable building glows with natural light, warms itself in winter and creates cool shade in the summer.

Casa de las Estrellas
Filled with gardens and light this charming guest house is located on a quiet street in the historic center and close to San Miguel’s colorful Artisan’s Market. The home’s living spaces are situated around a lush flower filled courtyard with an ancient pomegranate tree. Students share rooms with private terraces and begin their days with a delicious breakfast in the lovely dining room. The guest house is modern, yet saturated with the deepest of Mexican tradition.

Mundo Joven Hostel
In the heart of Mexico City, Mundo Joven overlooks the towers and domes of the grand Metropolitan Cathedral. Sights and sounds that have echoed through this world capital for millennia surround you. Students share simple rooms with breakfast in the restaurant at the ground floor. Their philosophy is “We believe in respect for the planet and understanding among nations and that the cultural exchange between the young will build the foundations of lasting peace.”