



Cooperative of Women
from the
Xeabaj (Tecpan) Community



Las Gladiolas is a group of 14 women artisans who live in a remote community outside of Tecpan and have been working together for 18 years. For many years these women embroidered t-shirts, earning a small but steady income. Then the market for t-shirts began to fade away, and Mayan Hands, a Fair Trade export organization, worked with the women to find new products that would sell. After trying out a variety of different crochet and embroidery techniques, they were still lacking a viable product. Then Thirteen Threads offered the women a workshop in basket making using pine needles, and that has been tremendously successful. Now the women are consistently creating new designs for export only and earning three to five times more money than they were.

In 2009, *Las Gladiolas* was named Thirteen Thread's best group of the year, an annual selection by the OB team based on a number of merits including; level of active participation, product development, group organization and strengthening, and overall level of self-sufficiency.



Our day tour of this community includes a stop at the Iximche Maya ruins in Tecpan.