

## **Maya Ceramic Production and Trade: A Glimpse Into Production Practices and Politics at a Terminal Classic Coastal Maya Port**

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The coastal port site of Vista Alegre is located along the northern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula, in the modern state of Quintana Roo, roughly 7.5km east of the modern Mexican port town of Chiquila. This honors thesis project, centered on ceramics and ceramic production, investigates the diversity of one type of ceramic in particular: Vista Alegre Striated. This project brings into question a large diversity of forms unexpectedly found within a single archaeological context. Specifically, measuring rim thickness and shape informs questions about production locale and tendencies in morphological forms. In order to understand these questions, a great deal of background research is necessary. Namely, exploring the history and development of ceramic analysis in the Maya area and the theoretical extent to which ceramics can inform archaeological inquiry. In addition to this understanding of ceramics, the sociopolitical history of the time period (~800-1100AD) is important because of the monumental changes in Maya society: the rise of Chichen Itza as a regional power, the increase in maritime trade, heightened “internationalization” in art and architecture across the peninsula, and a significant shift toward market-based economies. Understanding these shifts in socioeconomic behaviors is essential in understanding how and why the production of a utilitarian, ‘every-day’ ceramic like Vista Alegre Striated would appear across a sizeable study area in multiple forms. This study is important to the field of archaeology because it provides essential information about production locales for the Vista Alegre project currently conducted by Dr. Jeffrey Glover, helps archaeologists understand the challenges and limitations of living in a Maya coastal community, and informs questions of very specific trade relations between Vista Alegre and surrounding sites in the context of a non-commercial ceramic type.