

MEXICO CITY

The Historic Center of Mexico City was built on the ancient lake of Mexico.

The Aztec Empire's governing center, which still preserves the elements of the urban structure of the pre-Hispanic city, as in Xochimilco, where the Aztec-originated lake system survives.

For its historical and cultural value, for being an exceptional example of urban settlement, for having witnessed the fusion of two cultures, inscribed on the World Heritage List on 11 December 1987

City Heritage

The Historic Center of Mexico City is the heart of the city, being located in the center of political, economic, social and cultural power of the country is also the heart of Mexico.

For its historical and cultural value, for being an exceptional example of urban settlement, for having seen the fusion of two cultures in its buildings, houses, streets and cathedral.

EXPLORE THE CITY

San Carlos Academy

Founded by Royal Decree of December 25, 1783 as the Royal Academy of San Carlos de las Nobles Artes, is located in what is now known as the Historic Center of Mexico City, in the old street of the Love of God, today, and to be located there the school, Academy Street. Architecture, painting and sculpture were the main branches that were taught. It has been the object and consequence of the ideologies of the times. At first, it emerged as the "academy" that the enlightened eighteenth century proclaimed, which manifested the need to have a place and a collegiate group to theorize and practice a method of study. Since its birth, the Academy of San Carlos has been the place where the most important artists of the country have converged, for this reason it has had several moments of boom during its trajectory. As a formator, under classical and orthodox teaching precepts, she made a radical break in the second decade of the 20th century, when the architect Antonio Rivas Mercado was removed from his post as director after a strike instigated in part by Dr. Atl against the stiffened teaching precepts. From this moment on (1913), it can be said that the Academy began its incursion into a modern stage of teaching, since, among other notable events, personalities who would be milestones in Mexican painting and who might even appear to be opposites in style, joined its teaching staff. Simultaneously, the Outdoor Painting Schools were also born, which would be a response and a melting pot of new ways of seeing art.

Schedule: Monday to Sunday from 10:00 to 19:00 hrs.

Location: La Academia 22, Cuauhtémoc, Centro Histórico, 0606060 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 5522 3387

MUNAL

Built over the former Hospital of San Andrés, former novitiate of the company of Jesus. The building of the National Museum of Art is a witness to a time, culture and society that was developing and dreaming of Order and Progress. With these ideals in mind, Porfirio Díaz ordered the construction of the Communications Palace from 1902 to 1911, which was completed.

On July 25, 1982, the National Museum of Art opened its doors to show the public a cultural and artistic legacy and the monumentality of its building. In the year 2000, it reopened its doors to the public as the MUNAL after an intense process of remodelling and technological and museological updating in the manner of the great galleries of the world. Currently, it exhibits, studies and disseminates Mexican and international art from the sixteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century, providing innovative experiences for the understanding and aesthetic enjoyment of its collections and exhibitions in the public.

Schedule: Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 to 17:30 hrs.

Location: Calle Tacuba 8, Cuauhtémoc, Centro Histórico, 06010 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 8647 5430

Hemicycle to Juárez

The Hemiciclo a Juárez is a cenotaph - an empty tomb - erected in honour of Don Benito Juárez García, former Mexican president, whose remains rest in the Pantheon of San Fernando.

This Carrara marble building was built in 1910 by order of Porfirio Díaz, who led the inauguration ceremony on September 18, 1910 as part of the celebrations of the Centennial of Independence.

Designed by architect Guillermo Heredia, the Hemiciclo a Juárez is the most important monument dedicated to the Meritorious of the Americas.

The central body of the monument, flanked by six Doric columns on each side, has a festoon and a medallion of laurels in the centre of which the following legend can be read:

"To Benito Juarez. The Homeland."

In the lower part of the central body is the symbolic tomb crowned by a republican eagle with its wings outstretched; its base is decorated with pre-Hispanic grecas and supported by a lion lying on each side.

The sculptural ensemble at the end of the hemicycle represents Benito Juárez seated between two allegories: the Homeland, on his right, which crowns him with laurels, and the Law.

Timetable: Free.

Location: Av. Juárez s/n, Cuauhtémoc, Centro, 06010 Mexico City.

Former College of San Ildefonso

The school of San Ildefonso was one of the most important educational institutions in the capital of the new Spain. Its foundation by the Jesuits dates from 1588, as a seminary where the students of the congregation lived. Around 1618 it began to function under the royal patronage granted by Felipe III, thus establishing the oldest and most royal school of San Ildefonso.

Schedule: Tuesday from 10:00 to 20:00 hrs. Wednesday to Sunday from 10:00 to 18:00 hrs.

Location: Justo Sierra 16, Centro Histórico, 06020 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 3602 0034, 35 y 36

Temple of Santo Domingo

The present temple has a barrel vault built of tezontle, and is supported by magnificent quarry arches. The Baroque façade has three sections: at the bottom, the images of Saint Augustine and Saint Francis of Assisi can be seen in niches along the entrance gate. In the central body there is a quarry relief in which you can see the patron saint of the Order receiving from St. Peter the walking staff and from St. Paul the letters of preacher and in the upper body, between the two windows that illuminate the choir, there is the image of the Virgin Mary in her invocation of the Assumption to whom the temple is dedicated.

The present high altar, inaugurated only one month before the beginning of the war of independence, is attributed to the distinguished Spanish architect Manuel Tolsá, also author of the Mining Palace and the famous Caballito; it is of neoclassical style, presided over by the Christ of the Novitiate and replaced the previous one, made of gold.

Timetable: Free

Location: Belisario Domínguez, Centro, Cuauhtémoc, 06000 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 5526 5526 8713

Metropolitan Cathedral

The greatest work of colonial architecture on the American continent, Mexico City's metropolitan cathedral stands majestically in the capital's main square as the largest cathedral in Latin America and one of the most emblematic temples of Christianity in the world. The history of the metropolitan cathedral is also the history of the viceregal Mexico and a story in stone of its different architectural styles. Built over three centuries, in this work we can recognize Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassical elements that intertwine harmoniously to form a work of great cultural and spatial richness unique in its kind. This fascinating temple has a Latin cross floor plan with three main doors to the capital's main square, the center being a jubilee door that is only opened on special occasions. The route takes place through an ambulatory that surrounds the choir and the parishioners' area, around which 14 chapels with different titles are arranged around the perimeter, as well as the main altars. One of the most

outstanding elements of the interior is the choir, richly decorated in baroque style, with two monumental organs and furniture from the Asian colonies of the Spanish Empire, with the most outstanding being the masonry and the lectern, from Macao and the Philippines respectively. On the east side of the cathedral is the metropolitan tabernacle, probably the best executed churrigueresque façade in Latin America, which houses an austere interior that serves as a parish church for different celebrations.

Schedule: Monday to Sunday from 10:30 to 16:00 hrs.

Location: Plaza de la Constitución S/N, Centro, Cuauhtémoc, 06000 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 41 41 65 40 40 13

Palace of Fine Arts

It is considered the highest representation of culture in Mexico and the most important monument dedicated to the best of the fine arts in all its manifestations. It offers multiple artistic activities, including the seasons of the most important artistic groups of the National Institute of Fine Arts, such as the National Symphony Orchestra, the National Dance Company, the National Opera Company, the National Theatre Company and the Amalia Hernández Folkloric Ballet.

Location: Juarez Avenue, corner of Eje Central, Centro Histórico, 06050 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 8647 6500 Ext. 2152, 2153 y 2154

National Palace

Epicenter of the political life of the country since the viceroyalty, the National Palace is the headquarters of the executive power of Mexico and one of the most emblematic buildings of the city.

The National Palace has an ancient history that goes back to the Aztec times when the Moctezuma Palace was located on this site, which occupied exactly the same extension of the current building. After its destruction during the conquest of Tenochtitlan, on its ruins Hernán Cortés ordered the construction of a great palace, which decades later was sold by his son Martín Cortés 1562 to the Crown, who acquired it to build the necessary facilities for the administration of the Viceroyalty of New Spain.

The National Palace has a large number of points of interest inside, including the famous murals painted by Diego Rivera on the main staircase and in the corridors of the central courtyard that graphically narrate the history of Mexico from pre-Hispanic times to the 20th century, in a work full of symbolism, color and Mexican nationalism. Another noteworthy site is the site in homage to Juárez, which houses the belongings, furniture and documents of the president, one of the most influential in national history, who also inhabited this site.

Schedule: Tuesday to Sunday from 10:00 to 17:00 hrs. (may be closed without notice due to official events)

Location: Plaza de la Constitución S/N, Centro, Cuauhtémoc, 06066 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 3688 1255, 01 55 3688 1602

Ex Convent of Regina

At the beginning of the Regina walkway is the temple which, in addition to giving the street its name, evokes the prayer "Regina Coeli", which refers to Mary with her son, the risen Jesus. Its present dimensions, still cut out, outline the presence of the vicerealty convents in Mexico City.

Regina Coeli owned and rented sixty-two houses, although her livelihood also came from charities and pious works. The second façade, which leads to the cloister now occupied by the hospital, shows the remodelling at the end of the 17th century.

Its baroque architecture alludes to the monarch sobriety of the interiors, even though the altarpieces and canvases of its chapel became one of the most praised of its time. In 1863, because of the Reform Laws, the nuns were cloistered and their property expropriated, but they were reinstated during the reign of Maximilian.

In November 1967, President Juarez evicted them again and handed over the convent to the army. Without things being clear, it is known that four years later, the building served as a payment to Ramon Obregon (who was in 1887 mayor of the Santiago Valley, Guanajuato), so that when circulating among individuals, its facilities or parts of them, exempted the Juarista demolition.

Location: Calle de Regina 7, Centro, Cuauhtémoc, 06080 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 5709 3124 and 01 55 5709 7580

Main Temple

For the Mexica, the Templo Mayor occupied the center of the universe and for that reason it could not be moved. This is why every time they wanted to enlarge it, a new building was built on top of the old one, preserving the same fundamental characteristics, that is, two chapels on the top and a double staircase on the main façade. This was done on at least seven occasions.

The archaeological site of the Templo Mayor comprises 1.2 hectares, undoubtedly the most important religious building in Tenochtitlan, dedicated to Huitzilopochtli, the solar god of war, and Tlaloc, the god of rain. However, other relevant constructions were rescued in the vicinity: To the north, there are three smaller adorations, including a Tzompantli Altar and one of two red temples dedicated to the god Xochipilli, as well as the larger Eagles' House; towards the west, and very close to where the museum is located, you can see the partial remains of the great platform that limited the sacred enclosure of Mexico-Tenochtitlan on all four sides. Finally, to the south is the second of the red temples consecrated to the god Xochipilli, which certainly imitate the Teotihuacan architectural style.

Schedule: Tuesday to Sunday from 9:00 to 17:00 hrs.

Location: Seminar No. 8, Centro Histórico, Cuauhtémoc, 06060 Mexico City.

Contact: Tel. 01 55 55 4040-5600 Ext.412930, 412933 and 412967