

PUEBLA

With exceptional religious architecture from the 17th and 18th centuries.

It was founded in 1531 by Fray Toribio de Benavente. The city of Puebla was of the utmost importance as it was an obligatory passage between the port of Veracruz and Mexico City. Its beauty deserved to be recognized as "The Reliquary of America". Among its main and most beautiful buildings are the cathedral, the temple of Santo Domingo, the palace of the Archbishop and his palafoxian library, the house of Alfeñique and other old houses with its walls covered with bricks and talavera.

In recognition of its cultural and historical value, the city of Puebla was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on December 11, 1987.

City Heritage

Puebla, a religious center par excellence, was the first corner of the Spanish conquerors' settlement in the region and they worked hard to create one of the most beautiful and rich cities in Mexico.

EXPLORE THE CITY

Alley of the Toads

It is said that in colonial times the waters of the San Francisco River frequently overflowed, flooding the alleyway of 6 Sur. The people made use of the flooding of the river and installed some mills there. However, the stagnant water and the activities carried out there attracted a large number of toads, which gave rise to the current name of the road.

Every Sunday, you can find countless items in the tianguis of the Callejón de los Sapos. Antiques, handicrafts, art objects and numismatics predominate. It is a traditional tour when you visit the capital of Puebla. On Friday and Saturday nights the square is filled with music that can be enjoyed in a bar or café.

Location: Avenida 6 between 3 and 5 Oriente, Zona Centro, Puebla, Puebla.

Handicrafts

Puebla has a wide variety of local handicrafts. One of the oldest handicrafts, with more than 150 years of tradition is the Talavera pottery. Another tradition is blown glass, a difficult job to make. Finally, the pottery is used for the elaboration of kitchen utensils such as pots of different sizes.

Municipal Palace

The original building underwent several modifications; in 1704 it was demolished and rebuilt with a graceful two-level archway. Around 1897 a new project was commissioned to the English architect Charles T.S. Hall who designed it in English Elizabethan style, concluding the work in 1906.

The elegant double arcade courtyard stands out. The majestic marble staircase, the stained glass windows allegorical to the city and above all, the great hall of Cabildos, Renaissance style, with paintings by the artist Herrera Gutiérrez. There, they preside over the two royal certificates: the one that grants the title of City to the Puebla de los Ángeles and the other that confers its own coat of arms.

The façade houses a replica of the "Esquilón San José" (Bell of Dolores), a gift from the then President of the Republic, Mr. Adolfo López Mateos, which is played every September 15, during the "Cry of Independence" ceremony.

Amparo Museum

The Amparo Museum building was part of a group of buildings that had different uses over time. Its history dates back to the 16th century when in 1538 the first hospital in the city of Puebla, called San Juan de Letrán, known as "El Hospitalito", was founded.

Around 1642, Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza requested that the sick be transferred to another hospital. The building and the adjoining properties that included the vegetable garden and an unbuilt plot of land changed their use, housing several schools, such as the School for Girls dedicated to the Purest Conception, and a shelter for married women or widows.

Likewise, its walls saw the passing of a priest's house, a nursing home and private homes. From 1871, part of the building housed the house of Vicente Espinosa Bandini, grandfather of Manuel Espinosa Yglesias, founder of the Amparo Museum.

The vestibule opens with a portrait of Mrs. Amparo Rugarcía by Diego Rivera and a painting of her grandson, Pedro Diego Alvarado Rivera, alluding to the layout of Puebla by the angels and the crossbreeding; as well as a frieze of pre-Hispanic stamps and a glass Tzompantli, works by the architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, a museum adapter.

In the 20th century, the complex was adapted by Architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez to house the Amparo Museum, inaugurated in February 1991.

Schedule: monday, wednesday to friday and sunday from 10:00 to 18:00 hrs, saturdays from 10:00 to 21:00 hrs.

Location: Calle 2 Sur No. 708, Centro, 72000 Puebla, Puebla.

Contact: Tel. 01 (222) 229 3850

The Parián

Old square of San Roque that was built in 1801. It is covered in most parts by brick with talavera tiles in the poblano style. It is considered as the first artisan market of the city and since 1961 it occupies the facilities of what was the old market called El Parián.

Currently the place is properly conditioned and renovated, with a total of 112 stores, where the most varied handicrafts produced in the different regions of the state are sold.

In El Parián you can find: talavera; textiles; saddlery; ceramics; pottery; wood and palm handicrafts; jewelry; chopped paper; blown glass; amate paper from Pahuatlán, the prestigious Puebla sweet shop and a large number of Puebla souvenirs.

Schedule: Monday to Sunday from 10:00 to 20:00 hrs.

Location: Corner 2 East and 6 Nte. No. No. 205, Centro, 72000 Puebla, Puebla.

Alfeñique House

It is a construction of particular beauty, representative of the Baroque art of Novohispano. The construction belongs to the last third of the 18th century, whose architectural elements, applied by the architect Antonio de Santamaría Incháurregui, gave the house a relevance and significance that is reflected to this day.

It has been known as Casa de Alfeñique since 1790 because of its richly decorated façade, which seems to be made of sugar paste, egg white and almonds, known in Spain as "dulce de Alfeñique".

This building was commissioned by its owner the master blacksmith Juan Ignacio Morales, the house belonged to the Morales family until 1874.

The second owner of the Casa de Alfeñique was Don Alejandro Ruiz Olavarrieta, founder and patron of the Monte de Piedad Vidal Ruiz until 1896, when he ceded it to the State Public Benefit and thirty years later, on May 5, 1926, during the term of the governor of the State of Puebla, the C. Claudio N. Tirado, became the first museum of the State of Puebla, with the name: Museo Regional del Estado.

The now Museo Casa de Alfeñique houses a collection of approximately one thousand five hundred pieces, in 16 exhibition rooms, on the ground floor, a carriage that was used by the presidential cabinet of Porfirio Díaz and a carriage used by personalities of the Clergy.

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

Location: Av. 4 Oriente No.416, Centro Histórico, 72000 Puebla, Puebla.

Contact: Tel. 01 (222) 232 0458

Gastronomy

To the immense number of dishes from that region, in which the gastronomic art of the peoples of ancient Mexico is evident, is added the imagery of the food that emerged during the viceregal period. This is how the Puebla table was born, expressed in the tradition and customs of the city of Puebla de los Ángeles, where wooden and clay objects, as well as elegant Talavera tableware, are a must.

Within the wide poblana gastronomy, are the incomparable flavors of: chalupas, pinched, esquites, peneques, picadas quesadillas, tamales, tacos, tlacoyos, tostadas, chilaquiles, memelas, mole de olla, chilemole, corn pudding with rajas, enchiladas, ponteduros, pozole, roasted or cooked corn, atoles, fried foods and flakes, all made from corn. To all this, we can add the stuffed chiles capones, the chiles en nogada, the mole de convento, the mancha mantel, the pipián, the cuitlacoche, the rompope, the lágrimas de obispo, the pasta de almendra, the pancakes of Santa Clara and the famous sweet potatoes from Puebla.

Cathedral of Puebla

The Cathedral of Puebla is the most representative monument of this city. At the beginning of the city the construction of a cathedral was not contemplated, because the seat of the diocese was in Tlaxcala. It was not until 1535 when the then bishop, Fray Julián Garcés, decided to change the seat to this city, beginning the construction of a first cathedral. Years later, the construction of a more dignified Cathedral in Puebla began, so the project was asked of one of the most important architects of those times, the Spanish architect Francisco Becerra.

In 1640, when Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza arrived in the city, he found that the construction works were stopped, so he decided to give the definitive impulse, so Bishop Palafox consecrated the Cathedral of Puebla with a mass on April 18, 1649, still missing the facades and towers.

The construction of the famous towers of this Cathedral took almost two centuries. The north tower, begun in the early 17th century, was completed in 1678 and the south tower was completed 90 years later in 1768. These towers are the highest of the Latin American cathedrals, with more than 70 meters.

One of the most enigmatic spaces of the Cathedral is located behind the central door, called "the Forgiveness". There are the cenotaph (a funerary monument that does not contain the body of the person to whom it is dedicated) of Juan de Palafox and the tombstone of Bishop Pantaleón Álvarez de Abreu. During his bishopric, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza had his gravestone made, but in 1649 he was called to Spain and years later sent to the Diocese of Burgo de Osma. Juan de Palafox y Mendoza died on October 1, 1659 in Spain. However, it was decided that this tombstone would be located in Puebla due to the important role that Palafox and Mendoza play in the development of this city and its cathedral.

Location: 16 de Septiembre s/n, Centro, 72000 Puebla, Puebla.

Contact: Tel. 01 222 232 3803

Palafoxian Library

Its history begins on September 5, 1646, when the then bishop, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, donated his private library of 5,000 volumes to the schools of San Pedro and San Juan, on the condition that anyone who knew how to read be allowed access, and not only church members and seminarians, which is why the Palafoxiana Library is considered the first public library of the American continent.

In the great door of the library, there are the coats of arms of the Marquis of Ariza, in memory of the noble title that Juan de Palafox obtained from his father Don Jaime Palafox and Rebolledo, Marquis of Ariza, and the coat of arms of Palafox as Bishop of La Puebla de los Ángeles. Inside is a wooden wheel called a lectern, which allowed readers to consult several books at the same time without placing them on a table.

At the back of the library, the golden altarpiece frames the painting of the "Virgin of Trapani", under which is read the phrase *Maria sedes Sapientia*, which is translated as Mary Throne of Wisdom, finished off by a painting of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

In addition to being considered the first public library on the continent, it is recognized as the only one in America that still preserves its furniture, shelving and, above all, its collection of 42,556 volumes and 5,345 manuscripts in its original building, the oldest of which is "The Twelve Books of the History of Herodotus", printed in Venice in 1473.

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

Location: Av. 5 Oriente 5, Centro, 72000 Puebla, Puebla

Contact: Tel. 01 (222) 2323483

Rosary Chapel

Located inside the Temple of Santo Domingo de Guzmán, this chapel is considered the greatest jewel of Mexican Baroque thanks to the exquisite decoration inside. Its construction dates from the seventeenth century and is the first in Mexico dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary.

The sumptuous decoration of onyx, gilded plasterwork, paintings and tiles covered with 22-carat gold leaf make the chapel unique in its kind, considered the eighth wonder of the New World and named a "reliquary of America" by Pope John Paul II in 1979.

The sides of the nave contain 6 canvases by José Rodríguez Carnero, with scenes of the joyful mysteries of the Rosary.

It was the first chapel dedicated to the Virgin of the Rosary that was built in Mexico, as a sign of the great devotion of the Dominicans to the Rosary, also to teach the faithful to pray it, promoting the visual art to educate the people.

Schedule: Monday to Sunday from 10:00 to 12:15 and 16:30 to 18:00 hrs.

Location: Calle 5 de Mayo and 4 Poniente No. 101, Centro, 72000 Puebla, Puebla.

Contact: Tel. 01 (222) 232 3548

Zócalo of Puebla

The Zócalo is located in the heart of the historical center of the city of Puebla, surrounded by shops, restaurants, the Cathedral of the city, the Municipal Palace, cafes, etc.. Before it was called the Zócalo, the area was known as the Plaza de Armas, because if during a battle the enemy dominated it, he could control the rest of the city from it.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the Zócalo was used for theatrical performances and other leisure activities, even though its design was different, the fountain was located on one side for bullfighting. In 1869 the present garden was started and from 1872 to 1883 the iron benches were placed.

Temple of the Society of Jesus

This temple, completed in the 18th century, stands out for its magnificence, presiding over the small square that gives it a great perspective. The white of its imposing façade is enhanced by a grey quarry portico at the entrance in Italian style framed by the two bell towers. Inside, in the neoclassical style, the marble altarpiece and the sculptures of the 12 apostles stand out. The sacristy houses an artistic treasure in the canvases of Carnero, and excellent marquetry work from the Mudejar tradition.

This is the burial place of Catarina de San Juan, better known as "La China Poblana", whose way of dressing inspired the traditional dress of Mexican women.

Location: Calle 4 Sur No. 102, between Palafox and 3 Oriente, Centro, 72000 Puebla, Puebla.

Main Theater

It is considered the oldest theatrical space in Latin America and was inaugurated in 1761 with the staging of "Antes que todo es mi dama" by Calderón de la Barca.

During the War of Independence (1810-1821) the public stopped attending the theatre. Between 1812 and 1814 it was temporarily closed by order of the Town Hall as it was considered an offense to God to do comedies in these circumstances. For a while, artillery was kept in the theatre's courtyard and then bullfights were resumed. The building deteriorated to such an extent that it was closed for repairs between 1817 and 1820.

During the 19th century, the public liked the performance of hors d'oeuvres, sketches and zarzuelas. It was a performance of this last type of show which closed a first cycle in the history of the Teatro Principal in 1902. On July 27th, under the baton of Aureliano Machorro, the numbers "El Bateo", "Toros de Saltillo", "Género Ínfimo", and "Enseñanza Libre" were performed. At six o'clock on the 28th a fire consumed the Teatro Principal. Public opinion pointed out that it was an attack, but the official version argued that a candle had been forgotten in a dressing room.

Later, the story goes that in 1920 it was rebuilt and inaugurated once again under its current name, in 1941 a severe reform modified its appearance somewhat, even though the structure of the fountain in the esplanade retains the well-known viceroyalty elements of the time.

