



Mexico City

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Why Go?

Much-maligned Mexico City is cleaning up its act these days. Revamped public spaces are springing back to life, the culinary scene is exploding and a cultural renaissance is blooming. But here's the kicker: by somehow managing to distance itself from the drug war, the nation's capital has emerged as a 'safe haven' of sorts.

Remember that Mexico City is, and has ever been, the sun in the Mexican solar system. A stroll through the buzzing downtown area reveals the city's storied history, from its pre-Hispanic underpinnings and colonial-era splendor to its unabashed contemporary edge. Organized chaos rules in this high-octane megalopolis, yet rest assured that the city offers plenty of escape valves in the way of old-school cantinas, intriguing museums, dramatic murals and boating excursions along ancient canals. With all that and so much more going on here, you just might be swayed to scrap those beach plans.

Best Places to Eat

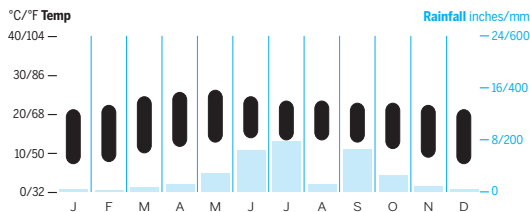
- » Pujol (p107)
- » El Hidalguense (p106)
- » Contramar (p106)
- » Corazón de Maguey (p109)
- » Hostería de Santo Domingo (p103)

Best Places to Stay

- » Red Tree House (p100)
- » Villa Condesa (p101)
- » Chalet del Carmen (p102)
- » Hotel Catedral (p97)
- » Mexico City Hostel (p98)

When to Go

Mexico City



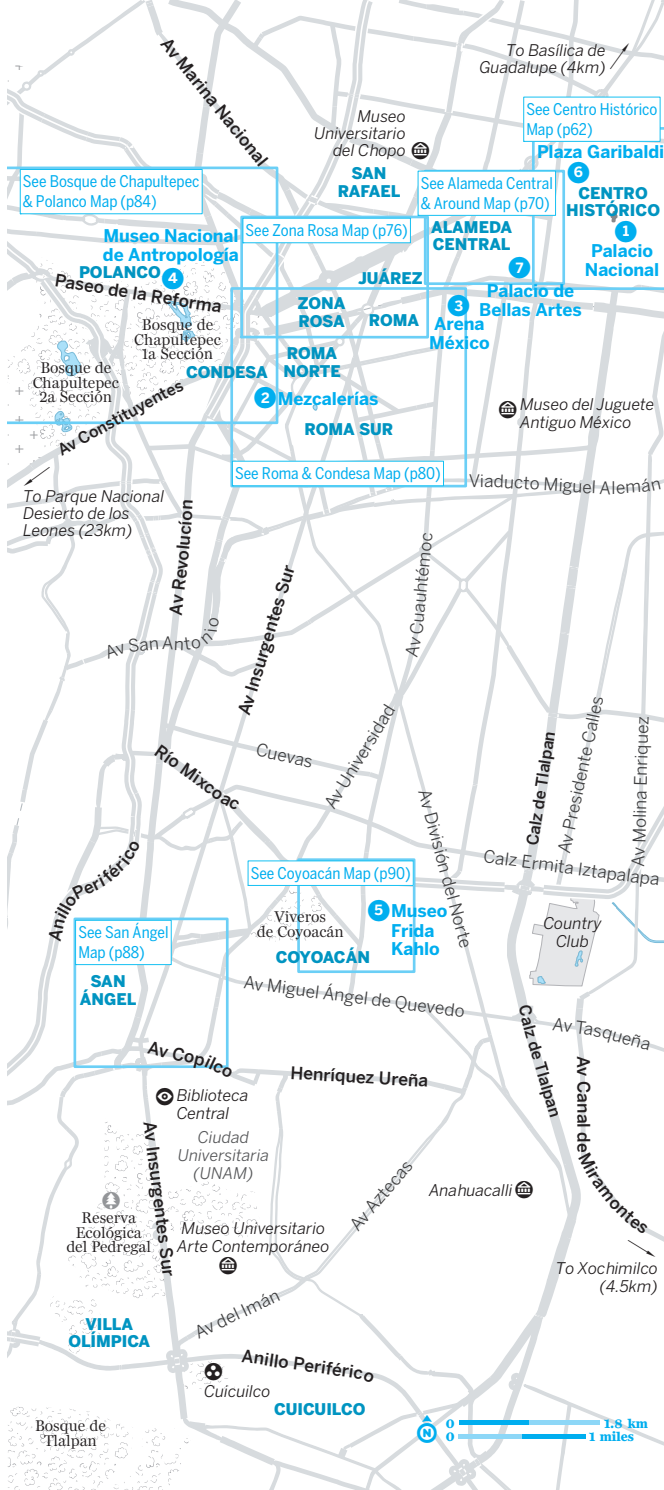
Late Mar–Apr
Vacationing *chilangos* clear out for the Easter holiday, leaving the city remarkably calm.

May The Centro's streets become lively stages for cultural events during the Festival de México.

Nov Rainy season ends and the month begins with colorful Day of the Dead festivities.

Mexico City Highlights

- 1 Study Diego Rivera's tableau of Mexican history at the **Palacio Nacional** (p61)
- 2 Sip some smoky agave-based drinks at the **mezcalerías** (see boxed text, p112) in Roma and Condesa
- 3 Cheer on the 'good guys' at the *lucha libre* bouts of **Arena México** (p118)
- 4 Gaze upon the Aztec sun stone and other superb relics from Mexico's pre-Hispanic past at the **Museo Nacional de Antropología** (p75)
- 5 Share Frida's pain at her blue birthplace, the Casa Azul in Coyoacán, now home to the **Museo Frida Kahlo** (p89)
- 6 Sing along to mariachi ballads in the soulful **Plaza Garibaldi** (p66)
- 7 Feast your eyes on the colorful murals and folkloric dance performances at the **Palacio de Bellas Artes** (p69)



See Bosque de Chapultepec & Polanco Map (p84)

See Centro Histórico Map (p62)

See Zona Rosa Map (p76)

See Alameda Central & Around Map (p70)

See Roma & Condesa Map (p80)

See Coyoacán Map (p90)

See San Ángel Map (p88)

Bosque de Tlalpan

To Basílica de Guadalupe (4km)

To Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones (23km)

To Xochimilco (4.5km)

0 1.5 km / 0 1 miles