



Western Central Highlands

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Best Places to Eat

- » Birriería las Nueve Esquinas (p580)
- » La Fonda de la Noche (p580)
- » Ajijic Tango (p591)
- » Lula Bistro (p581)
- » Restaurante Lu (p606)

Best Places to Stay

- » La Casa Encantada (p616)
- » Casa Rosa (p605)
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- » Las Sabilas (p577)
- » Villa Ganz (p577)

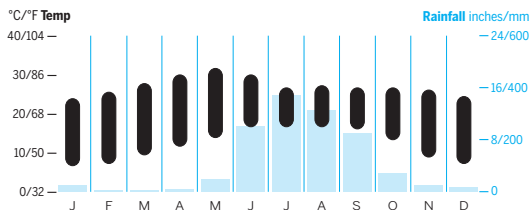
Why Go?

With exquisite colonial architecture, delicious food, butterfly orgies, lonely indigenous pueblos, bustling cities and volcanic calderas, the western central highlands are a wonderland. The climate is wonderfully warm and the natural beauty is as diverse as it is mind-blowing. You'll see layered mountains, expansive lakes, thundering rivers and waterfalls and a tapestry of cornfields, avocado groves, agave plantations and cattle ranches. This is Mexico's beating heart.

Guadalajara sprawls, but it doesn't overwhelm; it's a great walking city, with lovely colonial architecture and some of Mexico's best craft shopping. Morelia boasts a colonial heart unrivalled anywhere in Mexico, a young population and superb eating options. Nearby is the Reserva Mariposa Monarca, a forested butterfly sanctuary you'll remember forever, while Pátzcuaro, an endearing colonial town and the epicenter of the Purépecha culture, is the place to be for the Día de Muertos celebration.

When to Go

Guadalajara



Feb The best time to see the incredible natural canopies of monarch butterflies in the Reserva Mariposa Monarca.

Early Nov Join some of Mexico's most famous celebrations for the Día de Muertos in the indigenous villages around Lake Pátzcuaro.

Mar Come and join the stars of Mexican and world cinema at Guadalajara's excellent Festival Internacional del Cine.

Western Central Highlands Highlights

- 1 Get to know spectacular **Morelia** (p600), with its glowing cathedral, rooftop bars and clubs nestled in colonial relics
- 2 Explore charming **Guadalajara** (p568), with its excellent art museums, ancient churches and superb eating possibilities
- 3 Absorb the beauty of the **Reserva Mariposa Monarca** (Monarch Butterfly Reserve; p610), the winter retreat for millions of butterflies and an incredible natural phenomenon
- 4 Peer into the mystical soul of the Purépecha people in tranquil **Pátzcuaro** (p612)
- 5 Bag two volcanic peaks – the snowy and extinct **Volcán Nevado de Colima** (p599) and young, precocious **Volcán Parícutín** (p624)
- 6 Head to Tlaquepaque, Guadalajara, for some of Mexico's best **crafts shopping** (p585)
- 7 Travel the Tequila Trail to see Mexico's most famous drink being made in the distilleries of **Tequila** (p592) and other nearby towns

