

RUPA Pass Travel Report September 2019

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Enjoying San Miguel de Allende and Mexico City

Hello Fellow Aviators,

One of the more popular hidden gems in Mexico is the small town of San Miguel de Allende. Tourists have a hard time over-running this town because it's not close to any airport. And the longer it stays that way, the longer San Miguel will remain one of the best kept secrets of Mexico.

You can see and eat to your hearts content in San Miguel for about three days. After that you'll start feeling the urge to move on. So that's why I include a four hour bus ride to Mexico City whenever I go.

San Miguel is a two hour Uber ride (\$40) from BJX, Guanajuato/Leon Airport served by United Express. — And, by the way, Uber is extremely cheap in Mexico.

The town is filled with art galleries, cafes and restaurants and surrounds a main



courtyard and park called “El Jardín (The Garden). The first couple of blocks around this center of town are closed to vehicles and are for pedestrians only.

For hotels, I recommend you use Trip Advisor, and make sure you use the Map feature to find a place as close as possible to El Jardín, in the center of town.

That way you can return to your hotel when you want to without taking long walks back.

Also, if you go in the summer make sure you find a hotel that has air conditioning. Many don't. And just like other places in the world, some hotels don't have elevators, so if that's important to you, please take heed.

One note: I hope you like church bells when you sleep. However, if you get a block or two away from El Jardín, the bells are less distracting. And in rooms with air conditioning you can just shut the windows.

On day three, after I've eaten all the amazing food I can stomach, (my favorite restaurant is El Pegaso) I normally take the 10AM four hour bus ride to Mexico City Norte Bus Station. The cost is less than \$25 and a bottle of cold water is provided.

When arriving in CDMX, (Mexico City or Ciudad de Mexico), take Uber to your hotel.

I recommend a hotel as close to El Zócalo as

possible, also called El Plaza de Constitución. (See photo on the right). There are so many things to see and places to eat within walking distance of this Plaza. Two of the most amazing restaurants I've eaten at in CDMX are located in the same building, an old colonial mansion with two open air courtyards. The two restaurants are located in each of the courtyards. One is *Azul Historico*, and the other, a thirty second walk into the next courtyard, is *Puntarena*. I like them both and I usually end up going to both of them at least once. I tend to be a pragmatic



person but I encourage you to check Trip Advisor and Yelp and discover any of the scores of other great places to eat here as well.

I've never needed reservations for Puntarena, but it might be a wise thing to do at Azul Historico only because they have fewer tables.

My favorite things to do in Mexico City:

- * The National Anthropological Museum — the largest in the world. Tickets are available at the door, usually no waiting.
- * The Pyramids at Teotihuacán. You can purchase tickets at the gate. If you're the adventurous type you can ride over the pyramids at sunrise in a hot air balloon.
- * The home and Museum of Frida Kahlo, the famous 20th Century Mexican artist and her husband Diego Rivera in the nearby Coyoacán neighborhood. You might enjoy your visit more if you watch the movie *Frida* available on some streaming services or on DVD from Amazon. After the museum you might like strolling through Coyoacán. (Purchase your tickets for the museum online at least a day or two ahead to avoid standing in a long line).
- * Chapultepec Castle (free for seniors) very close to the Archeological Museum. This is where you will get up close and personal with Mexican history.
- * The Diego Rivera murals a 10 minute walk from the Plaza de Constitución and located inside the Secretary of Education Building covering three levels of the interior courtyard chronicling the struggle of Mexico to free itself from Spanish rule. It's free but you need to leave your drivers license at the entrance.
- * Diego Rivera Murals Museum. A small entrance fee. This museum has Rivera's most popular murals.
- * The Templo Mayor Mayan ruins located one block from the Plaza. When you're done, stop for refreshments at the El Mayor rooftop cafe across the street (the one with all the umbrellas)

WARNING: ALL museums in Mexico City are closed on Mondays. Exceptions are the Pyramids, and The Rivera murals at the Secretary of Education building. Leaving Mexico City offers you choices of several UA flights a day to EWR, IAD, ORD, IAH and SFO.

One reminder, when planning a trip to any city, always check Trip Advisor for the "**Hotels**" tab, "**Things to do**" tab and the "**Restaurants**" tab.

When in another city, Trip Advisor also has another interesting feature for finding restaurants. "**Near me**" will show you all the restaurants nearest to your location.

Adíos!