

MEXICO

Architectural Landmarks

Tenochtitlan

At the time of the Spanish Conquest in 1521, the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan was among the largest cities in the world, with perhaps as many as 200,000 inhabitants. In less than 200 years, it evolved from a small settlement on an island in the western swamps of Lake Texcoco into the powerful political, economic, and religious center of the greatest empire of Precolumbian Mexico.



Pre-Hispanic City of Teotihuacan

The holy city of Teotihuacan ('the place where the gods were created') is situated some 50 km north-east of Mexico City. Built between the 1st and 7th centuries A.D., it is characterized by the vast size of its monuments - in particular, the Temple of Quetzalcoatl and the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, laid out on geometric and symbolic principles.



Chichen Itza

Chichen Itza, located at the northern tip of the Yucatán Peninsula of modern Mexico, was a Maya city. Flourishing between c. 750 and 1200 CE, the site is rich in monumental architecture and sculptures of jaguars, eagles, and feathered-serpents. Probably a capital city ruling over a confederacy of neighbouring states, Chichen Itza was one of the great Mesoamerican cities and remains today one of the most popular tourist sites in Mexico.



Palacio de Bellas Artes

The **Palacio de Bellas Artes** (Palace of Fine Arts) is a prominent cultural center in Mexico City. It has hosted some of the most notable events in music, dance, theatre, opera and literature and has held important exhibitions of painting, sculpture and photography, and thus has been called the "Cathedral of Art in Mexico". Immense murals by world-famous Mexican artists dominate the top floors of this splendid white-marble palace.



El Ángel

The Angel of Independence, most commonly known by the shortened name *El Ángel* and officially known as *Monumento a la Independencia* ("Monument to Independence") is a winged statue of Victoria, the ancient Roman goddess of victory. She holds a crown of laurel in one hand (to place on the heads of the triumphant independence insurgents) and a broken three-link chain in the other, to symbolize three centuries of Spanish rule in Mexico before Mexicans rose up and broke from Spain.

