

T+L | WORLDS BEST

The Top 10 Cities in Mexico & Central & South America

While countries with top cities ranged from Guatemala to Argentina, our friend just south of the border dominated with five winning urban destinations.



Posted July 11, 2017

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T+L readers' passion for traveling to countries throughout Central and South America remains strong, as evidenced by the fact that winning cities can be found in places like Colombia and Peru. But half of this year's top urban centers were located in one country alone — Mexico — proving that politics and walls aside, our readers love to travel south.

Every year for our [World's Best Awards](#) survey, T+L asks readers to weigh in on travel experiences around the globe — to share their opinions on the top cities, islands, cruise ships, spas, airlines, and more. Readers rated cities on their sights and landmarks, culture, cuisine, friendliness, shopping, and overall value.

San Miguel de Allende, a city with manicured gardens, colonial architecture, and a vibrant arts scene, stole voters' hearts this year, earning it the No. 1 slot not only in this regional category, but also on our overall World's Best Cities list. "San Miguel is Mexico's reward to those who wander into the interior highlands," said one reader. "The city has a new cosmopolitan feel that certainly feels welcoming to everyone."

It was joined by another Mexican-interior city, Oaxaca, a destination with an alluring indigenous history and deeply rooted traditions that span from rich heritage foods to beautiful handicrafts. [Mexico City](#) also ranked among the top five winners, no doubt thanks to its reemergence as a cosmopolitan *ciudad* brimming with chic hotels, like the St. Regis (a World's Best winner this year), elegant shops, and innovative chef-owned restaurants.

Cuzco, which took the No. 3 slot, was once best known as the jumping-off point for Machu Picchu. But with a pre-Columbian temple and fortress and streets lined with colonial buildings, the UNESCO World Heritage site has earned its own bragging rights. "Everyone must travel to Cuzco," said reader Susan Bhati. "The buildings are a mix of Incan and European design, and there's fun shopping. We loved the restaurants and cobblestoned streets — it's a great city to travel by foot." Antigua, Guatemala, another history-rich city, came in at No. 5.

Scroll down to discover our other winners.



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10. Buenos Aires, Argentina

Score: 83.96



9. Mendoza, Argentina

Score: 84.00



8. Bogotá, Colombia

Score: 84.68



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7. Mérida, Mexico

Score: 85.67



6. Guadalajara, Mexico

Score: 85.80



5. Antigua, Guatemala

Score: 86.65



Fito Pardo/Getty Images

4. Mexico City

Score: 88.30



3. Cuzco, Peru

Score: 89.36



2. Oaxaca, Mexico

Score: 90.41



1. San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

Score: 92.12

Having been in 850-plus cities in 43 countries, this is one of my favorite places to visit anywhere in the world,” wrote in one reader. The UNESCO World Heritage site has certainly earned high praise from such a frequent traveler. Mexico’s colonial-era jewel is renowned for its art galleries and handicrafts markets, which sell everything from papier-mâché and hand-blown glass to beautiful antiques, as well as historic attractions like the late-19th-century Iglesia de la Inmaculada Concepción. Many of our readers highlighted that it was ideal for couples. “This is a city full of magic and culture, colors and flavors,” added another fan. “It’s perfect for a romantic getaway.