

The Top Cities in Mexico



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Our readers remain passionate about these urban destinations south of the border.

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When it comes to visiting Mexico's cities, T+L readers appreciate a place rich in history, food, and architecture. That much is clear, given that San Miguel de Allende and Oaxaca took the No. 1 and No. 2 spots, respectively, in this year's World's Best Awards. Even more impressive: they also appear in the No. 1 and 2 positions of the Top Cities in the World, as voted by T+L readers.

San Miguel de Allende draws travelers with its captivating colonial architecture and vibrant creative scene, while Oaxaca offers a window onto a rich indigenous culture and one of the world's most complex and inventive traditional cuisines. "Oaxaca is a city steeped in history," wrote one respondent. "The surrounding pyramids and geological sites will amaze. And the food is delicious, with unusual ingredients that tantalize even the most sophisticated palate."

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.

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Political relations between the United States and Mexico may be in a tangled state, but our southern neighbor never ceases to fascinate travelers. During the past year alone, tourism to Mexico has increased by 12 percent. Mexico City offers visitors intimate neighborhoods, energetic street life, and world-class restaurants — and an excellent exchange rate doesn't hurt. "It's a surprising city," wrote one reader. "I was quite taken by the abundance of greenery, the planting of which has helped with smog issues. I found shopping for both modern and traditional items quite satisfying, and brought back everything from jewelry to tiles." Last year, Mérida, the capital of the Yucatán, was named the American Capital of Culture, a tribute to its busy roster of musical and artistic events, as well as its impressive museums, including Gran Museo del Mundo Maya; the city is also close to fascinating archaeological sites. Guadalajara, in the central state of Jalisco, is a quieter alternative to Mexico City and boasts an equally rewarding food scene.

Read on for more on the winner and to see how the others stacked up.



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5. Guadalajara

Score: 84.56



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4. Mérida

Score: 85.81



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3. Mexico City

Score: 87.65



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2. Oaxaca

Score: 90.52



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1. San Miguel de Allende

Score: 91.94

T+L readers cited this city’s pleasant climate, superb restaurants, and friendly and helpful residents as reasons to visit. A UNESCO World Heritage site, the historic center of San Miguel de Allende is filled with architectural treasures, from Baroque churches to brightly painted haciendas. It’s also a city that values handiwork: lively markets and shops carry such locally made crafts as wood carvings, jewelry, woven blankets, pottery, and leather goods. One reader summed up the general consensus: “This city is magical and perfect.”

See all of our readers' favorite hotels, airlines, cruise lines, and more in the World's Best Awards for 2018.