

CULTURAL EXCURSIONS TO SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE BY RICHARD ALMADA DESERT ART TOURS

There has been much said and written about San Miguel de Allende through the centuries. The fact that San Miguel de Allende is one of Mexico's oldest colonized cities with origins since 1552 makes it a historically important center.

The city is partially named for the Franciscan friar, Juan de San Miguel that started the mission. The Spaniards built roads to Mexico City to protect the rich silver mines that were economic fuel for the new nation. Great wealth and power was centered in Guanajuato and the surrounding areas. The mission was a stronghold to protect against the fierce resistance of ancient dwellers, the Otomi and the Chichimecs. Much of the Mexican Revolution was centered here and one of the city's favorite sons, Ignacio Allende born in 1779, was a hero in the revolution against the Spanish reign. That famous battle took place September 16, 1811 and he was executed in 1821. Later in 1826 he was recognized as a martyr and the town was renamed, San Miguel de Allende.

This wealthy silver mining town became a down on it's luck town after the mines dried up. Not until the Mexican Government dedicated the city as a Historical Monument did the economic life return to San Miguel from it's rebirth as a tourist designation. In 1938 Peruvian artist Felipe Cossio del Pomar founded Escuela Universitaria de Bellas Artes, and placed it on the map as a leading academic magnet to foreigners and Mexicans alike. Today Bellas Artes is regarded as a fine school and still occupies the grand historic mansion. You will find many Colonial homes in this sparkling city, some have been transformed into commercial dwellings, stores, boutiques and the charming hotels. There has always been a large American presence here since Stirling Dickinson discovered the town in 1937. Americans began flocking to San Miguel for it's easy life style, enchanting scenery and the relatively cheap cost of living at the time. In 1947 the U.S Government extended the GI Bill to cover education in Mexico for the displaced G I's after the war. Thus, the Expatriate Movement was born.

My interest in this city has been life long. Having lived in Mexico City early on, the fascination for "San Mike" has catapulted me to lead excursions to this fascinating place. The continuous enchantment in San Miguel de Allende has made it a favorite spot to visit. As an Art Advisor and Consultant in Southern California, I was propelled to expand the Cultural / Art Tours I developed in Greater Palm Springs into launching excursions to this sparkling city. The fact that I am well connected and have roots in Mexico, makes for a unique opportunity that benefits each one of my guests with a VIP experience.

Today this magical city flourishes in the present with a direct mirror to the past in perfect synchronicity. San Miguel de Allende is Mexico's favorite city and is also one of the safest in the Americas. I have orchestrated these VIP excursions with a special itinerary of rich experiences. We will visit architecture from Colonial, Baroque and Neoclassic Periods, and also partake in the delicious local cuisine infused with international flavor. We also include privately led tours to the art centers galleries and museums. We will enjoy escorted shopping trips for the finely crafted goods that the Mexican Artisans are known for. I have secured upgraded accommodations for my guests at charming boutique hotels, all former Colonial homes. I also offer guests exclusive opportunities such as invitations to private estates for receptions, dining and more. These excursions will surely become a favorite lasting memory. Each itinerary may change from tour to tour, customized to enjoy the many wonderful things there are to do while visiting San Miguel de Allende.

