



THE HOUSTON SEMINAR

STUDY TOUR
MEXICO CITY: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE
Tuesday, April 3–Monday, April 9, 2018



The Houston Seminar is pleased to offer a new look at historic Mexico City as we visit the classic sites that help us understand contemporary Mexican culture. This seven-day trip led by Dr. Lois Zamora, and assisted by Héctor Barraza and Michael Schuessler, begins the Tuesday after Easter, traditionally a time of relative calm in the city as many residents enjoy the holidays elsewhere.

We will explore the layered history of Mexico City, with the indigenous, colonial and revolutionary past still vitally present in modern Mexico City. How these multiple histories and cultures continue to interact and inspire Mexico City will be the focus of our visit. Along the way, we will have a conversation with Dudley Althaus, journalist with The Wall Street Journal, covering the tensions within Mexico today. Prior to the trip, we will have the opportunity to hear from three speakers addressing U.S.-Mexico relations (September/October 2017).

Our days will begin with informative talks by our leaders over breakfast in our hotel, Camino Real in Colonia Polanco, designed by Ricardo Legorreta. We will adopt the traditional local dining schedule of having our main meal midday leaving evenings open for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres either together or on your own.

DR. LOIS ZAMORA is the author of pioneering studies on hemispheric American studies and modern Latin American literature. Her publications have become classics in their respective fields. In 2007, she was awarded the John and Rebecca Moores Distinguished Professorship at the University of Houston. She was the founding chair of the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies in 2011, but has now happily returned to her position in the English Department, where she continues to teach and write about Latin American literature and art.

Day 1

Tuesday, April 3 Arrival in Mexico City

A motor coach will meet late morning flights from Houston at the Mexico City International Airport (officially Aeropuerto Internacional Benito Juárez) and transfer you to the Hotel Camino

Real in Colonia Polanco. After lunch in the hotel we will proceed to the Soumaya Museum (2011) and Jumex Museum (2013) in Polanco—both designed by noted architects and housing private collections. Evening welcome reception at the hotel pool.

Day 2

Wednesday, April 4 The Colonial Past meets Post-Revolutionary Mexico: Walking Tour of the Centro Histórico

Introductory conversation over breakfast followed by a walking tour of Alameda Park, the Palacio de Bellas Artes with its murals by Rivera, Orozco and Siquieros. After a short break, we will continue on to Correos (post office), the House of Tiles (now Sanborns), the Palacio de Iturbide, La Profesa Church, and then to the zócalo with its magnificent Cathedral. Our well-deserved late lunch will feature the acclaimed *chiles en nogada* at the oldest restaurant in the city, Hostería de Santo Domingo. Evening free.

Day 3

Thursday, April 5 The Indigenous Past

Breakfast and briefing before departing for the pyramids at the ceremonial site of Teotihuacán, approximately an hour outside of the city, stopping along the way to visit the sixteenth century Augustinian monastery at Acolman. Lunch will be in the vicinity with late afternoon return to our hotel. This evening's event will be held at the University Club. We will learn about the efforts to conserve corn varieties native to Mexico (including the original popcorn) over drinks and maize hors d'oeuvres and other Mexican delicacies.

Day 4

Friday, April 6 The South of the City: Tlalpan, Coyoacán and Xochimilco

Following this morning's breakfast and briefing we again depart by bus for Capilla de las Capuchinas in Tlalpan, the stunning chapel designed by Luis Barragán. From there we go to La Noria, in Xochimilco; the hacienda (now museum) of Dolores Olmedo, the great patron of Diego and Frida and, from there, on to the Studios of Diego and Frida. Our late lunch will be in the great "hacienda" restaurant in San Ángel. The San Ángel Inn, serves the best margaritas in the world (according to an informed source!).

Day 5

Saturday, April 7 The South of the City: San Ángel

Breakfast and briefing before again departing by bus to the Church of the Virgin of Carmen in San Ángel with its beautiful altares de Dolores, the altars honoring the suffering Virgin during the Easter season. They are as complex and even more beautiful than the Day of the Dead altars. From there we walk a couple of blocks to the Bazar del Sábado in the Plaza San Jacinto. Lunch will be at nearby SAKS after which you can return to the hotel or remain in San Ángel for more browsing in this lovely neighborhood. Late afternoon and evening are free.

Day 6

Sunday, April 8 Chapultepec Museums

After our breakfast and briefing our bus will take us to Chapultepec Park, the Museum of Anthropology, and the Museum of Modern Art. We will enjoy our Farewell Lunch at The Casa Bell, in the Colonia Juárez. This evening we will visit the Plaza Garibaldi where the mariachi bands and Jarocho trios (from Veracruz) congregate, hoping to be hired for a party that evening, or at least paid to play a song or two. We will check out the famous cantina on the Plaza called Tenampa (memorialized in many a mariachi ballad).

Day 7

Monday, April 9 Departure

Breakfast before bus leaves hotel for mid-morning return flights from the Mexico City airport.

If you are interested in planning time in Mexico City prior to or after the Study Tour we can provide suggestions for trips outside the city, or more things to see and do in the city. The hotel will be glad to accommodate extra days, and Héctor will be happy to provide guiding service if you contact him separately on his website: <http://mexicocityelitetours.com>.

Recommended reading:

- *Mexico City Reader* (The Americas Series) by Rubén Gallo, Paperback \$15.97
- *First Stop in the New World: Mexico City, the Capital of the 21st Century*, by David Lida, Paperback \$15.98
- *Down and Delirious in Mexico City: The Aztec Metropolis in the Twenty-First Century*, by Daniel Hernández Paperback \$10.31
- *Modern Architecture in Mexico City: History, Representation and the Shaping of a Capital*, by Kathryn O'Rourke. (\$49.95)
- *Mexico City: An Opinionated Guide for the Curious Traveler*, by Jim Johnston (\$13.90)