

*Pacific Horticulture Society and Sterling Tours invite you to join*

## **San Miguel de Allende**

*Escorted by Cheryl & Robert Nichols*

*Feb 13-19, 2017*

San Miguel de Allende is a city that manages to be both quaint and cosmopolitan at the same time. Once an important stop on the silver route between Zacatecas and Mexico City, its historic center is filled with well-preserved buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries. With its narrow cobblestone streets, leafy courtyards, fine architectural details and sumptuous interiors, San Miguel de Allende is arguably the prettiest town in Mexico.

**Monday, Feb 13** San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Transfers are included from Leon or Queretaro airports to the El Palomar Hotel in San Miguel de Allende (see Flight Tips below). Meet Cheryl, Robert and your traveling companions for a Welcome Reception on the rooftop terrace followed by a festive dinner at a nearby restaurant. Reception, Dinner

**Tuesday, Feb 14** Following breakfast at the hotel, join our local guide, Francisco Correa, for a private walking tour of San Miguel de Allende, including an exclusive visit to two private gardens in town, followed by lunch at world-famous *The Restaurant*. Note that in Mexico, lunch is known as “la comida,” and is often the most important meal of the day. After lunch, the balance of the afternoon is at leisure. Guests may wish to visit the Parque Juarez to see the plants offered for sale at the annual Candelaria festival. Later, half of our group will enjoy an evening at La Cocina cooking school where owner Kris Rudolph, owner of El Buen Cafe in San Miguel de Allende, will give us a hands-on lesson in creating a deliciously authentic Mexican meal. Breakfast & Lunch for all guests; Dinner and margaritas for those going to the cooking school this evening.

**Wednesday, Feb 15** After breakfast at the hotel, we will enjoy a private docent-led tour of El Charco del Ingenio, a Botanical Garden and outstanding Nature Preserve, with a vast collection of cacti and other Mexican Plants, many of which are rare or in danger of extinction. Next we visit Fabrica La Aurora, an art & design center with art studios, galleries, antiques, cafe and restaurants where we will have time for browsing and lunch. This evening those guests who did not participate in the Day 2 Cooking Class will do so. Breakfast for all guests; Dinner and margaritas for those going to the cooking school this evening.

**Thursday, Feb 16** Following a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, we'll visit two charming private gardens. One is home to a Mask Museum. The fascinating mask collection includes Mexican ceremonial dance masks from various regions in Mexico. Following the tour, the balance of the day is at leisure. This evening we will be treated to dinner and music at Bistro Mi Casa. Bonnie Boden described her experience at Mi Casa, “I could not get over the roasted tomato soup!

Add some amazing music from Gil and you are in for a treat! Good food, great atmosphere, and amazing music.” Breakfast, Dinner.

**Friday, Feb 17** Today we visit the historic city of Dolores Hidalgo. The city was a small town known simply as Dolores when Father [Miguel Hidalgo](#) uttered his famous cry for the independence of Mexico (the *Grito de Dolores*) there in the early hours of September 16, 1810, in front of his parish church. After Mexico achieved independence, the town was renamed *Dolores Hidalgo* in his honor. We will have time to shop for *talavera* ceramics for which the state of Guanajuato is justly famous. We’ll walk through the zócolo with its Spanish Baroque church and statue of Father Hidalgo, but it is most famous for offering over a hundred varieties of homemade ice cream. Later we will visit the Sanctuary of Atotonilco, a World Heritage Site, built in 1748 and known as the America’s Sistine Chapel. Late afternoon free in San Miguel for shopping or relaxation. Breakfast.

**Sat Feb 18** After breakfast at the hotel we depart for artist Anado McLaughlin’s whimsical home and gallery, Las Ranas. Words simply cannot describe this fantasy estate, awash with vibrant colors, mosaics, and creative artwork. We continue to another imaginative property before our stop at Galeria Atotonilco. The owner finds the most talented and imaginative artists and craftsmen working in Mexico today, and then buys their finest work including crafts, folk art, pottery, papel mache, vintage serapes, and Oaxacan wood carvings. We’ll have a memorable farewell late lunch in the garden at Nirvana’s superb restaurant, known for its inventive, farm-to-table cuisine. We return to the hotel late afternoon, with the balance of the day at leisure, perhaps to enjoy one last dinner in San Miguel de Allende. Breakfast, Lunch.

**Sun Feb 19** Following breakfast at the hotel, time to say “Adios” to San Miguel de Allende transfer back to the airport for your flight home. Hasta la Vista! Breakfast.

#### TOUR LAND COST PER GUEST BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY:

Based on a minimum of 13 guests, \$2195 per person for members of Pacific Horticulture Society, \$2295 for non-members\*. Supplement for single occupancy \$755.00.

\*Membership starts at just \$28 so if you are not a member, we strongly encourage you to join before you register for the tour as you can then receive the member price. You can join online here: <http://membership.pacifichorticulture.org/joinrenew>

#### COST INCLUDES:

- 6 nights accommodations at El Palomar Hotel (see special “Hotel” note below)
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- 6 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners, 1 reception

- Motorcoaches, shuttles, taxis as specified in itinerary
- Top local guide
- All sightseeing and entrances as per the itinerary
- Airport transfers (see separate section on “Flights”)
- Deluxe portfolio of documents
- Escorted by Cheryl & Robert Nichols
- Donation of \$225 to Pacific Horticulture Society

#### COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Airfare
- Travel insurance
- Tips to local guides and drivers.
- Passports

HOTEL ---We have reserved all of the rooms at El Palomar Hotel for both of our trips. Each room is unique, ranging from deluxe rooms to 2 bedroom suites:

<http://hotelelpalomar.com.mx/rooms-hotel-el-palomar-san-miguel-de-allende/>

Room assignments will be made on a first-come, first-served basis so we encourage early reservations for these tours. Note that for single travelers wishing to share, several of the suites offer multiple bedrooms, each with private bathroom and a common living room so it may be possible to share with other single travelers without sacrificing your privacy. Extra night rates available upon request.

FLIGHTS --- San Miguel de Allende is served by Leon airport (BJX) and Queretaro (QRO) airport, each about 1.5 hours away from San Miguel. US carriers offering service include United, American and Delta. Mexican carriers include Volaris, Interjet and Aeromexico. We suggest booking flights to arrive either airport no later than 4pm on day 1 of the tour, so you will have sufficient time to reach El Palomar Hotel before the welcome reception and dinner. If meeting this schedule becomes a problem, please consider coming a day early.

PASSPORT--a passport valid at least 6 months beyond trip date is required for this trip.

PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES - These tours include a SIGNIFICANT amount of walking, FREQUENT use of stairs and steeply sloped pathways on uneven or unpaved surfaces. Some of the places we will be visiting can only be seen on foot with no other access possible. Guests with limited mobility MUST consult with Sterling prior to tour registration.

For reservations and information, please contact:

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