

January 8,9

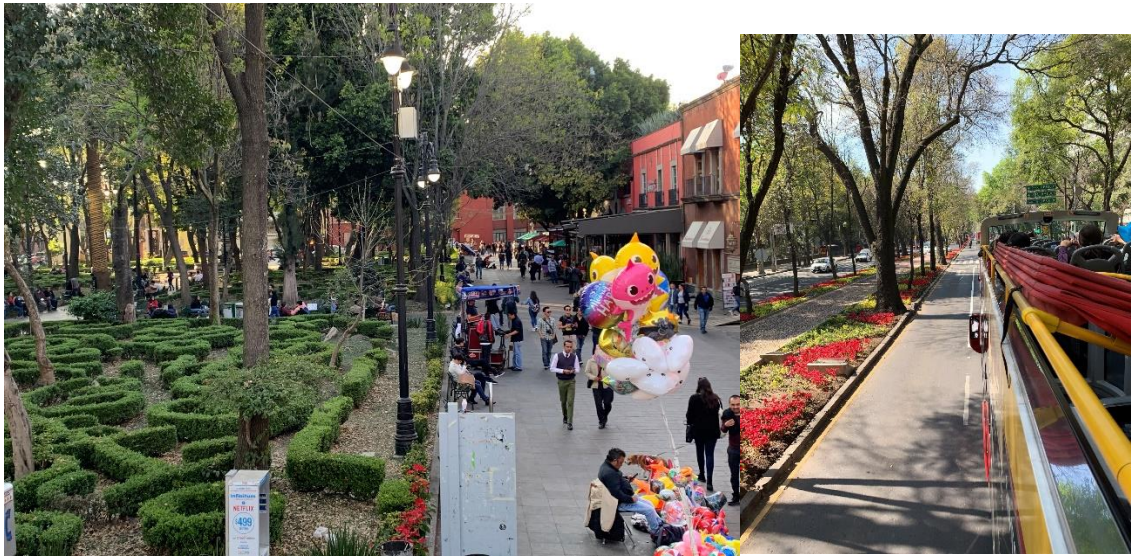
We are taken by the majestic architecture of Historico Ciudad de Mexico. Mexico City was not our intended destination it was meant to be a stop over on our way to the Monarch Migration sanctuaries with a week chill San Miguel de Allende. Second day in Mexico City and we are elated. We had no expectations other than to visit the Anthropological museum and the Blue house of Frieda Kahlo. On the way Mexico City blew us away.







The blend of historic, traditional and modern architecture is a sight to be seen. But what was for no apparent reason (other than the lack of research that characterizes most of our travels) so surprisingly gratifying was to see how green, clean and need to be seen it is. Cobblestone streets downtown, wide tree lined boulevards, so many parks and monuments and so many people spending time outdoors.

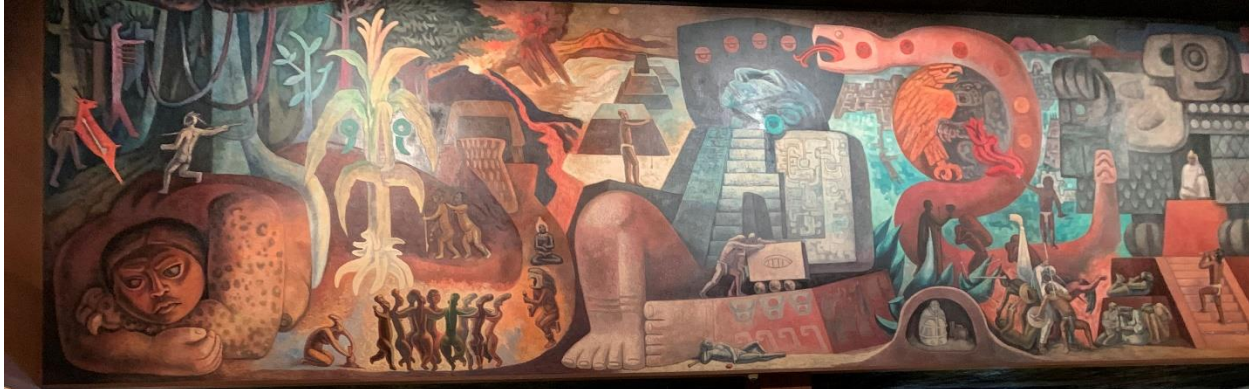




This is what our town Toronto needs so badly – a pedestrian space and a culture of outdoor socialization. We were reminded of Malaga where people are on the streets – all the time. Of course, as is our habit on the first day in a new town, we made some stupid mistakes in quick succession. First, we stopped at a Casa Churro across our Airbnb apartment located perfectly in the heart of the old city. Memories came back of a similar experience in Malaga. Bad mistake. The chocolate was too thick, and the Churros were stale and the combination disgusting. Then to add insult to injury we stopped at a wonderful restaurant for dinner. Beautiful ambience, authentic Mexican food and we were quickly talked into trying a tequila like Mexican drink: Mezcal. Not bad, but at \$21 a drop we were in on the scam. The food, not your mother’s favorite and at \$150 later a total disappointment. But all is well. The next evening we had chicken wings in a cafeteria/diner on “our” street for a fraction of last night.

The Anthropological museum in Mexico City is the most amazing attraction we have seen in all our travels. Easily a top 5. The architecture, exhibits, landscaping, and sheer richness of culture, art and sophistication of the early inhabitants of Central America was overwhelming.







January 10

Morning rush hour traffic in Mexico City is much worse than that of Toronto. Here it is not the road re-construction zones, rail stations or condo construction here it is mucho, mucho automobile. 30 years ago the world changed when the Berlin

Wall fell. Last night my world almost changed when your mother fell in our apartment missing the step from the “living room” to the “foyer” and flying at the wall nose bleeding first and spread eagle on the wooden floor. Fortunately, you will not have to make a pilgrimage to Mexico City. Nothing is broken a clown’s red nose and doing well. Most people her age would have spent the rest of their lives in a cast. Thank goodness mom has strong bones and strong spirit.

Our second target, visiting Frieda Kahlo’s house and museum was just as exciting. We knew and read about her art, (communist) politics and her on and of love affair with Diego Rivera. But, walking through her home watching her art creations, letters, memorabilia, her wardrobe, books, trinkets and her working deck was something different altogether. Then there are the gardens the plants, trees and flowers intertwined with some of her famous works is a sight to be seen. In fact, must be seen when in Mexico City.





The 3 1/2 hours on the Hop On Bus was good for nap time and little else with the exception that we were impressed with the amount of mega ultra modern street art installations. The newer parts of Mexico City are full of them. Adds character promotes artists and is pleasant on the eye. Back in Historico Ciudad the music is everywhere your ear can turn. Mexican, pop, hip hop from every corner by street musicians as well as recorded music.



Then the cops. Don't remember such an intense police presence. Makes you feel safe for sure but admittedly somewhat intimidating. Tourist tip: do not take the Green Hop On, line as a means of transport to the Frieda Kahlo museum. Uber will do a better job.



July 11

Today we walked 15,233 steps or 5.8 km and barely made it back in one piece. It is the most we walked in a long, long time but the sense of accomplishment (avoiding death from exhaustion) made up for the pain in every bone and muscle.





Later in the day we did what only we do. We did it in London a few times. We did it in Manchester, we did it in Liverpool, we did it in Paris, we did it in Milan, we did it in Rome. We did it in Barcelona, we did it in Madrid, we did it in Malaga. We did it in Istanbul and we did it in Rio de Janeiro and now we're doing it in Mexico City. It's not what you think. We just bought tickets to the Azteca stadium in Mexico City to watch a football (soccer) match between (frankly who cares) in the Mexican premier league. It is the stadium. A pilgrimage to the place of the "Hand of God" and the Goal of the Century by Diego Maradona when Argentina beat England 2:1 shortly after the Falkland war. The Azteca stadium is where the magical shadow loomed big on the surface during the 1986 World Cup.





If the Maracana in Rio is the Mecca of football, Azteca is likely Medina (no offence to our Muslim brothers just respect). These “hallow grounds’ that seat 90,000+ was at game time practically empty. This was the season opening match between Cruz Azul and Atlas (ha). It turned out to be a good match which ended 2:1 in favor of the Atlas visitors after coming back from a 0:1 deficit early in the match. The 3 goals were beauties, but the quality of the football was in no measure comparable to the European leagues. The almost empty Estadio Azteca took away.



January 12, 2020

Hearty breakfast and 4 more kilometers walking mainly to switch subway lines (3 times) on our way to Mexico City's main Bus Terminal to board the 12:30 bus to San Miguel de Allende. Just arrived 4 ½ hours later. First impressions all and more than we expected. A nice apartment near all the right places and a quaint town that we will discover, recover and enjoy for an entire week.





