

## SHOPPING

### top picks

- Centro de Artesanías La Ciudadela (p123)
- Plaza del Ángel Shopping Arcade(p124)
- Condesa (p126)
- Bazar Sábado (p123)
- Perfumería de Tacuba (p122)

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# SHOPPING

Shopping in Mexico City has real treasure-hunt appeal, with a tantalizing combination of *artesanía* markets, street-side hawkers selling indigenous crafts, kitsch and quirky shops, and those old-fashioned stores with faded-cream paintwork and piled-high dusty shelves that appear to have been in the same family for generations. There is a flip side, of course: a sophisticated strut of designer shops (with a rare lack of pedestrians) which would seem happily at home in the center of Beverly Hills. Shopping malls do exist here as well, although they tend to be on more of a human scale than the anonymous concrete jungles you may be used to back home.

This city is also a good place to get things like shoe soles and cameras repaired – Mexicans prefer to mend things if they are mendable, rather than throw them away – and plenty of small street-corner workshops supply this need.

In the Centro Histórico, in particular, shops tend to be grouped together according to what they are selling. This drives prices down, saving you both time and money, and is very convenient if you are seeking something specific.

Given the diversity and surprise appeal of the shopping experience here, aim to approach your consumer experience unhurried and with an open mind and prepare to be rewarded by a truly rich experience.

## SHOPPING AREAS

Mexico City's shopping map is fairly well-defined between swish and expensive, cutting edge and trendy, ordinary and everyday, and cheap, cheerful essentials.

If you're after top-designer threads, have an amble around Polanco where you can flash your gold card at Armani, and similar.

Condesa has mid-priced interesting and quirky shops, galleries, boutiques and craft outlets, particularly near the Parque Mexico and northwest around Roma.

The Zona Rosa is a shopping hotchpotch of gay accessory stores, quality shoes, Spanish

chain-stores, great antique and craft markets and the occasional brash or dated boutique (where polyester reigns supreme and prices are rock-bottom).

Another shop-happy district is the Centro Histórico, especially the streets around the Zócalo and the Alameda Central, where you'll find clusters of shops all offering one particular type of merchandise, sometimes filling whole blocks, or more. In Plaza Santo Domingo, for instance, scribes peddle decorative custom-made invitations and announcements.

If you can take the clamor and the crowds, Mexico City's craft markets and bazaars may be the most memorable shopping experience of all (see the boxed text, p123)

## OPENING HOURS

Most stores are open from 9am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday, although some more traditional shops close at 2pm Saturday. Stores in malls are often open on Sunday.

## CENTRO HISTÓRICO

Shopping in the historic center can be fascinating or daunting, depending on your viewpoint and map-reading ability. One moment you can be on a wide shopping street next to looming department stores, the next amid a *medina*-style street-life frenzy of food vendors, market stalls, manic traffic and no discernable way to cross the road. Approach it all with an open mind and zipped-up money belt and you

should have fun. Don't miss the scribes who set up under the arches in Plaza Domingo, reflecting an ancient tradition that the computer age has yet to steamroller into oblivion.

### ARTE MEXICANO PARA EL MUNDO

Map pp48–9 Artesanía

☎ 5521-3424; Monte de Piedad 11; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon & Tue, to 8pm Wed-Sun; ☒ Zócalo

Explore three floors of quality arts and crafts from all over Mexico, including rugs, jewelry, pottery and delightful shocking-pink papier-mâché dolls with plenty of glitter and attitude. The first floor has an excellent bookshop with coffee-table-style tomes on Mexican design, cookery and architecture. There's a cafeteria on the sixth floor with sweeping Zócalo views.

### NACIONAL MONTE DE PIEDAD

Map pp48–9 Artesanía

☎ 5278-1700; Monte de Piedad 7; ☒ Zócalo  
Sells traditional black pottery from Oaxaca, including intricately-carved pots and masks. The shop is located to the right of this lofty historical arcade, where several of the galleries double as pawnshops, with silverware and jewelry at excellent prices. Seek out Salon Esmeralda halfway down on your left; the items with a color tag are secondhand.

### PALACIO DE LAS MÁSCARAS

Map pp48–9 Artesanía

☎ 5529-2849; Allende 84; ☒ Garibaldi  
The use of masks in Mexico dates from 3000 BC, when they were used by priests to summon the power of deities in pre-Hispanic Mexico. If you are interested in summoning a couple into your suitcase, there are an astonishing 5000-plus to choose from, most of which are produced in Guerrero state.

### AMERICAN BOOKSTORE

Map pp48–9 Books

☎ 5512-0306; Bolívar 23; ☒ Allende  
Don't expect a Dalton's, but this place does have a small and classy selection of novels and books on Mexico in English, plus a solid range of Lonely Planet guides and some maps.

### LIBRERÍA MADERO

Map pp48–9 Books

☎ 5510-2068; Madero 12; ☒ Allende  
If you read Spanish and are interested in boning up on Mexican history, art and architecture, you will find plenty of equi-

sitely bound and illustrated books to peruse here, including secondhand editions.

### LA BODEGUITA DEL HABANO

Map pp48–9 Cigars

☎ 5510-1750; Bolívar 43; ☒ San Juan de Letrán  
An old-fashioned cigar shop run by an old-fashioned lady. One Cuban cigar will cost you M\$70, a handsome box of 25, more like M\$500. All the big puffers are here, including Montecristo and Quintero.

### EL PALACIO DE HIERRO

Map pp48–9 Department Store

☎ 5278-9905; Av 20 de Noviembre 3; ☒ Zócalo  
This is the city's smartest chain with all the standard departments, including cosmetics and perfumes, men's and women's fashion, shoes, accessories and homewares at prices that shouldn't blow your budget. Across the street is Liverpool (☎ 5133-2800; Venustiano Carranza 92), a similar breed of department store, only slightly cheaper; the building also charmingly dates from the '30s. Both stores have other branches in the city, but these two are the biggest and the best.

### DULCERÍA DE CELAYA

Map pp48–9 Food

☎ 5521-1787; Av 5 de Mayo 39; ☎ 10:30am-7pm; ☒ Allende  
This traditional candy store has been serving its sweet treats since 1874. Indulge in a few candied fruits or coconut-stuffed lemons or, at the very minimum, check out the ornate building which creates the perfect frame for the colorful confectionery display.

### SUPER SOYA

Map pp48–9 Food

☎ 5521-5073; República de Brasil 11; ☒ Zócalo  
A whole-foods shop where you can find all the normal healthy fare, including various nutty breads and biscuits, soy products, natural vitamins and minerals, sugarless sweets and invigorating power snacks for keeping up your pavement-pounding momentum.

### TARDAN

Map pp48–9 Hats

☎ 5512-3902; Plaza de la Constitución; ☒ Zócalo  
A wonderfully old-fashioned hat shop with 1950s-style custard colored walls and shelves displaying every kind of hat imaginable, including the ubiquitous sombrero (to greet the folks back home), safari hats, panamas, trilbies, tweed caps, straw and cowboy hats.

## top picks

### SHOPPING STRIPS

- **Av Presidente Masaryk** (Map p84) in Polanco is designer-shop heaven for the cash-flush customer.
- **Av Francisco Sosa** (Map p95) in Coyoacán is best known for its stunning colonial architecture, but is also home to an increasing number of fascinating shops.
- **Londres** (Map pp74–5) in the Zona Rosa has the best selection of *tiendas*.
- **Pasaje Polanco** (Map p84) in Polanco is flanked by intriguing small boutiques.
- **Plaza San Jacinto** (Map p101) in San Ángel is surrounded by one-offs shops and galleries.

# top picks

## BOOKSTORES

- Gandhi (right)
- Palacio de Bellas Artes (opposite)
- Centro Cultural Bella Época (p126)
- Cafetería el Péndulo (p124)

### LA PALESTINA Map pp48–9 Leather Goods

☎ 5512-8129; Av 5 de Mayo 20; **M** Allende  
You can pick up a magnificent saddle here, plus the leather Stetson to complete the yee-ha look. Altogether tamer, but of superb quality, are the classic leather briefcases which are so much classier for your laptop than the black vinyl norm.

### LE PARFUM Map pp48–9 Perfume

☎ 5512-6005; Motolinía 15; **M** Allende  
Essential aromatherapy oils, natural flower essences, various soaps (including one for insomnia), and chemical-free cosmetics are sold here, along with imitations of big-name perfumes from Givenchy, Dior and Lancôme.

### PERFUMERÍA DE TACUBA Map pp48–9 Perfume

☎ 5521-5912; Tacuba 13; **M** Allende  
This place has remained firmly in '50s mold, with its shelves of old-fashioned bottles containing perfume essences. You can pick up a 10g vial of perfume – a sniff at just M\$3.50. At that price it may be worth trying out a few more, with tantalizing names like 'honey', 'vogue', 'cappuccino' and, er, 'Christmas'.

### FLORICENTRO Map pp48–9 Souvenirs

☎ 5542-6074; Venustiano Carranza 116; **M** Zócalo  
Mexicans love their vibrantly-colored artificial flowers. You may not be of the same persuasion but this place is superbly kitsch, with a display that includes fake fruit that you would never be tempted to bite into.

### LAS FÁBRICAS DE MEXICO Map pp48–9 Textiles

☎ 5542-7129; Pino Suárez 17; **M** Zócalo  
The name says it all, except what is so great about these fabrics is that they are 100% cotton. Tablecloths, blankets and, yes, all-cotton underwear can be purchased here, as well as a range of super soft babygros.

## ALAMEDA CENTRAL & AROUND

This area flows seamlessly from the Centro Histórico with a similar combination of small (and grander) shops, teeming markets and squeeze-through narrow sidewalks. Get your bearings by standing in the massive forefront of the Palacio de Bellas Artes. Avenida Juárez across the way is a good place to start exploring, with its large, easily accessible bookshops and Sears department store; useful if you need to pick up any last-minute essentials (like some comfortable walking shoes).

### FONART Map p64 Artesanía

☎ 5563-0171; Juárez 89; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Sat; **M** Bellas Artes  
The well-known government-run handicrafts shop displays beautiful wares from around the country, ranging from Olinalá lacquered boxes to Oaxacan *alebrijes* and blankets from Teotitlán del Valle. Prices are fixed and higher than you pay in the Ciudadela market around the corner, but the quality is undeniably up there as well. The larger, original branch (Map pp42–3) is out at Patriotismo 691, Colonia Mixcoac, between the Bosque de Chapultepec and San Ángel.

### MUSEO DE ARTE POPULAR Map p64 Artesanía

☎ 5510-2201; [www.map.org.mx](http://www.map.org.mx); Revillagigedo 11; **M** Zócalo  
Opened in 2006, this museum showcases the country's finest folk art and handicrafts, so expect high quality and matching prices at the gift shop, which sells handmade Mexican crafts from all over the country, including delicate silver filigree earrings and embroidered shirts and dresses from Chiapas.

### GANDHI Map p64 Books

☎ 5510-4231; [www.gandhi.com.mx](http://www.gandhi.com.mx); Juárez 4; **M** Bellas Artes  
This is your best overall bet for both English language and Spanish books. It has a well laid-out selection, including magazines, journals, greeting cards and a fairly extensive array of DVDs. There are several other smaller branches around town; check the website for the exact location.

## BAZAARS & MARKETS

**Tianguis Cultural del Chopo** (Map pp42–3; Nepomuceno; ☎ 10am-4pm Sat; **M** Buenavista) A gathering place for the city's various youth subcultures. Punks, goths, metalheads and all the other urban tribes gravitate here each Saturday to buy and trade CDs, hear live bands and exchange ideas.

**Casa del Obispo** (Map p101; ☎ 11am-6pm Wed-Sat; **M** Miguel Ángel de Quevedo) Has a divine setting with its hacienda-style courtyard and central fountain. There are mainly jewelry and *artesanía* stores and prices tend to be comparable or slightly higher than the nearby Bazaar Sábado.

**Bazar Sábado** (Map p101; ☎ 11am-6pm Sat; **M** Miguel Ángel de Quevedo) If you are ready to shift your credit card into overdrive on classy crafts, jewelry, art work, sculpture and similar, then make a trip here your Saturday date. Don't miss the jewelry stall by the main entrance, where Rosalba Poulat makes her baubles in the same style as her father, who created jewelry for Frida Kahlo.

**Mercado Insurgentes** (Map pp74–5; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun; **M** Insurgentes) Between Florencia and Amberes, and packed with crafts – silver, textiles, pottery, leather and carved wooden figures – but you'll need to bargain to get sensible prices.

**Centro de Artesanías La Ciudadela** (Map p64; ☎ 10am-6pm; **M** Balderas) A favorite destination for various good stuff from all over Mexico. Worth seeking out are Oaxaca *alebrijes* (whimsical representations of animals in wood) and the Huichol beadwork ranging from masks to bowls and jewelry. Prices are generally fair even before you bargain.

**Bazar de la Roma** (Map pp92–3; ☎ Sat & Sun; **M** Cuauhtémoc) This market has used and antique items, large and small: books, beer trays, posters and furniture. There is also a similar antiques and art market along Álvaro Obregón on the same days.

**Bazar del Oro** (Map pp74–5; Calle de Oro; ☎ Sat & Sun; **M** Durango) This upscale street market between Insurgentes and Plaza Cibeles has clothing, gifts and an excellent eating section.

### LA TORRE DE PAPEL Map p64 Books

☎ 5512-9703; Filomeno Mata 6a; **M** Allende  
There are a handful of souvenir books here, plus maps. Perhaps of more interest to news-hungry folk will be the English-language newspapers, including the *Financial Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Daily Telegraph* (the latter photocopied). You can also buy stamps, another bonus.

### PALACIO DE BELLAS ARTES Map p64 Books

☎ 5512-2593; cnr Av Juárez & Eje Central; **M** Bellas Artes  
Located on the mezzanine floor of this magnificent palace, this bookshop has a superb selection of art books in English and Spanish, as well as posters, cards and various nifty gift items.

### BENE PASTA Map p64 Food

☎ 5512-8012; Ayuntamiento 12; **M** San Juan de Letrán  
Somehow you don't associate Mexico with homemade pasta, although this company has been going for some 100 years.

As you would expect, the pasta is wonderfully colorful: fusilli coils of red, purple, green and orange. If this sounds too much of an indigestible dazzle, they also sell traditional white, plus jars of homemade sauce.

### LA EUROPEA Map p64 Food

☎ 5512-6005; Ayuntamiento 21; **M** San Juan de Letrán  
Stocks imported goodies from Spain including all variety of tinned seafood, like *mejillones* (mussels) and sardines, plus olives and sweet treats. There is also an excellent wine and spirits selection, including the ubiquitous tequila.

### LA VINA DEL SOL Map p64 Wine & Liquor

☎ 5512-3355; Ayuntamiento 14; **M** San Juan de Letrán  
There are 100-plus tequilas to select from here, including grand reserves, gift packs with glasses and the more pedestrian plonk. Take a tequila maestro along, if you can, to help you make your selection, or ask the assistant nicely in your best Spanish.

## ZONA ROSA, CUAUHTÉMOC & JUÁREZ

The Zona Rosa and surrounding neighborhoods are home to a potpourri of tacky, expensive and quality shops. You can update your hip weekend wardrobe, replenish your English lit library, stock up on cut-price underwear and peruse some seriously classy antique and art shops. The tree-lined streets west of Génova in the heart of the Pink Zone are a good place to start your shopoholic strolling.

### ARTESANOS DE MEXICO

Map pp74-5 Artesanía  
☎ 5514-7455; Londres 117; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri; **M Insurgentes**

Elderly owner Antonio Frausto is a real charmer and will explain the origins of the intriguing items for sale here, which include furniture, masks, lacquered and painted trays, paintings and ceramic pottery. The prices are as good as the markets. Ask Antonio to show you the photo of him with Reagan in the '70s; it will make his day.

### PLAZA DEL ÁNGEL SHOPPING ARCADE

Map pp74-5 Antiques  
Londres; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 4pm Sat & Sun; **M Insurgentes**

There are more than 40 stores here, between Calles Amberes and Florencia, selling high-end antique silver jewelry, paintings, ornaments and furniture mainly dating from the mid-to-late 19th century. On Saturdays the number of stallholders typically triples, as an antiques flea market expands onto the sidewalk with all the associated banter, barter and bargains; the best time to visit is around 11am; a smaller flea market takes place here on Sunday.

### CAFEBRERÍA EL PÉNDULO

Map pp74-5 Books  
☎ 5208-2327; Hamburgo 126; **M Insurgentes**  
A branch of this classy local chain with the usual quietly bookish and elegant atmosphere. There are two levels with all the categories of books you could think of, including some English-language classics and novels. Arty greeting cards are also on sale, plus there's a small restaurant (p140).

### ZINIK

Map pp74-5 Boutique  
☎ 5208-3747; Londres 101; **M Insurgentes**  
There are plenty of one-offs here if you are pencil thin and looking for urban chic fashion to dazzle them on the dance floor, including tit-tight tops, skimpy skirts, jeans and sequined (or similar) dresses. Top off the outfit with some killer multicolored boots.

### MIXUP

Map pp74-5 Music  
☎ 0180-0006-4987; www.mixup.com.mx; Génova 76; **M Insurgentes**  
This music junkie chain-store has one of the biggest ranges of recorded music (both Mexican and international) in the city. Just south of here, if you are heading for the Insurgentes metro station, the sidewalk stalls that crowd the entrance include many vendors of pirated DVDs (average M\$15) but there's always the risk of a dud.

### DIONE

Map pp74-5 Shoes  
☎ 5514-5907; Hamburgo 124; **M Insurgentes**  
This Mexican shoe designer from Guadalupe creates classic shoes for women in the softest of leather. There are Spanish Pons Quintana boots here, as well as fellow Spaniard Baltarini's stylish line. Bags and wallets are also top notch; for the best deals head for the '50% off' rack at the back of the shop.

### VIA SPIGA

Map pp74-5 Shoes  
☎ 5207-9224; Hamburgo 136; **M Insurgentes**  
One of four Via Spiga stores in the city all specializing in classic and high-fashion men's and women's shoes and boots, with imports from Brazil and Italy. Coordinate your look with a snazzy leather bag and belt.

### PLAZA LA ROSA SHOPPING ARCADE

Map pp74-5 Shopping Center  
Londres; **M Insurgentes**  
A manageable-sized shopping mall between Génova and Ambero, with stores including Men's Factory, Campanita children's wear, Diesel for the streetwise look, Nutrisa health food store and Sorrento for shoes. There's a Starbucks too for those homesick for their daily slug of latté.

### PLAZA REFORMA MALL

Map pp74-5 Shopping Center  
www.reforma222.com; Paseo de la Reforma 222; **M Metrobus Hamburgo**

Opened in November 2007, this dramatic great slab of a building is home to all the usual international and local high street chains like C&A, Zara, Women's Secret, Bershka, Pull & Bear and, surprise surprise, yet another branch of the ubiquitous Sanborns.

### SOMOS PLATA

Map pp74-5 Silverwork  
☎ 5511-8281; Amberes 24; **M Insurgentes**  
All the silver jewelry on display here is by Mexican designers. There is a good choice of earring and necklace sets, mainly simple fine designs (rather than the chunky modern look). The same owner runs the adjacent shop of ornate silver ornaments for gathering dust on the mantelpiece.

### MINIATURAS FELGUÉREZ

Map pp74-5 Souvenirs  
☎ 5525-8145; Hamburgo 85; **M Insurgentes**  
This is one souvenir you can fit in your luggage. These tiny figurines are well made and amusing and emulate the Italian *presepe* (nativity) style with scenes ranging from a group of mariachis to a cheerful family of naturalists! There are thousands of individual pieces to choose from as well.

### RIO BRAVO

Map pp74-5 Tailors  
☎ 5514-0095; Hamburgo 175; **M Insurgentes**  
A classic tailor's which, with its wood-paneled interior and dapper service, is straight out of London's Jermyn Street. Choose from pure cashmere or slum it with a wool-and-cashmere mix. Expect to pay in the region of M\$3500 for the privilege, with an approximate time span of 10 days from tape-measure day.

## POLANCO

Polanco's Av Presidente Masaryk, lined with designer shops, has a global anonymity, especially when compared to the street market bustle of the center. All the big players are here, including Cartier, Louis Vuitton, Hermès, Mont Blanc, Hugo Boss and Dior, located on a stretch of a few blocks between Aristóteles and Molière. There are options for less cash-flush customers, mainly heading the other direction on Masaryk between Aristóteles and Hegel and around the Parque Lincoln to the south.

The futuristic-looking Plaza Molière mall at Molière and Horacio contains a branch of the classy El Palacio de Hierro department

store dealing mainly in clothes, toys and cosmetics.

### AMERICAN VINTAGE

Map p84 Boutique  
☎ 5250-1348; Presidente Masaryk 169; **M Polanco**  
Vintage clothing surely never looked this good back then. Tucked into a corner inside the American Apparel boutique, there is a great selection of threads here, including '60s frocks, floral-print sweaters, Capri pants and Art Deco scarves.

### MARINGO

Map p84 Boutique  
☎ 800-627-4646; www.maringo.com; Presidente Masaryk 274; **M Polanco**  
At last. Somewhere on the presidential street that sells great fashion at a price that won't force you to take out an extra mortgage. The range is extensive and, although top designers like Carolina Herrera are represented, there are less costly fashions, as well as shoes and accessories.

### SICARIO

Map p84 Boutique  
Séneca 41; **M Polanco**  
Refurbish your indie weekend wardrobe here; this boutique specializes in fun, non-conformist garments, so you can expect lots of hippy-style flowing skirts and dresses, plus hats and fun accessories, most of which are real one-offs.

### VILEBREQUIN

Map p84 Boutique  
☎ 5282-0741; Plaza Zentros; **M Polanco**  
Top up your swimming trunks collection here, a French company with a sense of humor. They come with every imaginable design, including flowers, stripes, birds and flocks of sheep (handy for counting if you can't sleep). You can even buy an oh-so-cute matching towel.

### CATIMINI

Map p84 Children  
☎ 5281-0741; Presidente Masaryk 350; **M Polanco**  
Stylish kiddies wear with top international names like Lili Gaufrette, Ikks, Kenzo and Osh Kosh and a range of cuddly to cool threads from 0 to 16 years, plus accessories.

### LA VILLA DE MADRID

Map p84 Food, Wine & Liquor  
☎ 5281-3588; Alejandro Dumas 78; **M Auditorio**  
An institution in these parts, this is where homesick Spaniards come to stock up on

## CLOTHING SIZES

### Women's Clothing

Aus/UK	8	10	12	14	16	18
Europe	36	38	40	42	44	46
Japan	5	7	9	11	13	15
USA	6	8	10	12	14	16

### Women's Shoes

Aus/USA	5	6	7	8	9	10
Europe	35	36	37	38	39	40
France only	35	36	38	39	40	42
Japan	22	23	24	25	26	27
UK	3½	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½

### Men's Clothing

Aus	92	96	100	104	108	112
Europe	46	48	50	52	54	56
Japan	S	M	M	M	L	L
UK/USA	35	36	37	38	39	40

### Men's Shirts (Collar Sizes)

Aus/Japan	38	39	40	41	42	43
Europe	38	39	40	41	42	43
UK/USA	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½

### Men's Shoes

Aus/UK	7	8	9	10	11	12
Europe	41	42	43	44½	46	47
Japan	26	27	27½	28	29	30
USA	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½

Measurements approximate only, try before you buy

their Manchego cheese and Marques de Cáceres vintages. You can also buy imported *fino* (sherry) here, plus a wide range of tequilas and liquors.

## PASAJE POLANCO Map p84 Shopping Center

Pasaje Polanco; **M** Polanco

This classy pedestrian walkway between Musset and Anatole France is flanked by equally sophisticated boutiques. One of the more unusual is **Casa Toroda** (☎ 5281-6097; local 105), which has beautiful engraved glass plates from Senegal, Kenyan masks, and Brazilian jewelry embellished with turquoise and coral. Shoe addicts can drool over the exquisite soft-leather shoes and boots at **Macarena Gutiérrez** (☎ 5282-3209; local 218) by the designer of the same name. **Las Artesanías** (☎ 5280-9515; local 360) has a large showroom of local crafts, including lacquer ware, woven textiles, leather items and silver jewelry at only marginally higher prices than elsewhere (given the location).

## LA DIVINA Map p84 Wine & Liquor

☎ 5250-1546; Newton 136; **M** Polanco

Enter the revolving door to be confronted by shelf upon shelf of more than 200 different brands of tequila, plus everything else guaranteed to put hair on your chest. There are fancy gift packs available and, if the garish signs are to be believed, everything is permanently cut price.

## CONDESA

Condesa has a hip Greenwich Village feel about it, with its leafy streets, sidewalk cafés and enticing combo of trendy boutiques and quirky shops. The dilemma is trying to actually *locate* anything, as there is nothing as predictable as a Condesa High Street. Instead, shopping is a constant adventure, or frustration, with the shops arbitrarily located throughout the neighborhood. Don't forget your map and be prepared to ask for directions or walk in ever-despairing circles, particularly around the *parques*.

## CENTRO CULTURAL BELLA ÉPOCA

Map p88 **B** Books

☎ 5276-7110; Tamaulipas 202; **M** Patriotismo  
A sprawling, but well laid-out, bookstore with all the categories you could possibly hope for, including an extensive Mexican and Spanish cookery section. Most of the books are in Spanish, but there are a few worthy classics (and similar) in English.

## HEADQUARTERS Map p88 Boutique

☎ 5211-7389; Atlixco 118; **M** Patriotismo

An artful store with a black ceiling and warehouse look selling the retro-chic fashion look, with Mexican brands like Reme Ritas and Sweet & Dandy cashing in on NaCo's success with their slogan-style T-shirts. The back of the store is a surprising flip into baby pink Japanese-style accessories by Guadalajara company Tatei (www.tatei.com).

## KUSS KUSS Map p88 Boutique

☎ 3547-3448; www.kusskussshop.com; Alfonso Reyes 123; **M** Patriotismo

A funky small space selling NaCo T-shirts and sweatshirts, and shiny lacquered floral bags and flat pumps made by Mexican designers like Mauricio Eduardo and García Gutierrez, plus the classic Jelly shoes from Brazil.

## ARE YOU A NACO?

It roughly translates as 'cracker,' meaning 'bad mannered, uneducated and lower class' (although it has been used to describe tacky nouveau riche types). Though traditionally a derogatory term, *naco* has lately been adopted by streetwise city folk who claim to admire the direct, uncomplicated iconography of everything from *Lucha libre* characters to soft drink bottles. In urban chic terms, it means the hottest look in casual wear to hit the streets since the days of grunge. Founded by a couple of college pals and now counting Diego Luna (of *Y Tu Mamá También* and *Frida* fame) among investors, the NaCo clothing line concentrates on T-shirts emblazoned with an edgy or graphic message. These often relate to Mexican pop culture and have clever multiple meanings, like *Brown is the New White*, which actually refers to rice, not people. The line also includes sweaters and tracksuit jackets and is fast obtaining a global profile, with sales to the US booming and a possible partnership with fashionable Brazilian shoemaker Havana on the books. Check out the NaCo Miscelánea shop in Condesa and stock up on these oh-so-trendy T-shirts ([below](#)).

## MILAGRO Map p88 Boutique

☎ 5286-5764; www.collection-milagro.com; Atlixco 38; **M** Patriotismo

Designer Sandra Gutiérrez works with local artisans to create a natty line of tightly woven raffia and embroidered bags in brilliant colors and designs and all shapes and sizes, including one for your lap top. Also stocks original jewelry and belts.

## NACO MISCELÁNEA Map p88 Boutique

☎ 5255-5286; Yautepec 126B; **M** Patriotismo

This cheeky streetwear store is in the heart of Condesa. The first surprise is the size of the place: tiny, the walls papered with lurid photos of strung-up chickens. The logos vary from 1950s Mexican truck companies to Superman. There are also tweed caps and sweatshirts for sale.

## BRIGUETTE Map p88 Chocolates

☎ 5286-3939; Fernando Montes de Oca 81; **M** Patriotismo

Fabulous locally produced chocolates, featuring flavors such as tea, kiwi, lavender, marzipan and pistachio, mixed spices and creamy truffle. You can buy one or two or float away on a chocoholic cloud and pick up a couple of hundred grams of your favorites.

## BODEGA DE QUESOS Map p88 Food

Fernando Montes de Oca 147; **M** Chapultepec  
Join the line of cheese-lovers at this corner shop, with its vast choice of national and international cheeses, including *requesón* from Chiapas, creamy Brie, Camembert, feta, gorgonzola, fresh mozzarella, parmesan and the costly cured Spanish Manchego (at M\$436 per kilo).

## GREEN CORNER Map p88 Food

☎ 5211-0276; Mazatlán 81; ☎ 7:30am-10pm; **M** Chapultepec

This natural food store stocks everything you could possibly shake a carrot stick at, including organic juices, tofu, nuts and dried fruits, whole-wheat pasta (a rarity here), organic spreads, jams and herbal teas. There's a restaurant, too.

## ESRAWE Map p88 Interior Design

☎ 5255-9611; www.esrawe.com; Alfonso Reyes 58; **M** Patriotismo

This local Mexican designer goes for the minimalist look, with his futon-style modular furniture in lime green and chocolate brown. The retro-style cabinets have hidden drawers, while the imported Naninarquina rugs from Spain give a whole new meaning to 'shag' rugs, with their incredible texture finishes in the shape of leaves and flowers.

## ENTENAYA PLATA Map p88 Jewelry

☎ 5286-1535; Montes de Oca 47; ☎ 11am-8pm Mon-Sat; **M** Chapultepec

Seven talented local jewelry designers have their work on display here. Silver is combined with coral, turquoise, seeds and semiprecious stones and each piece has a detailed explanation. Credit cards are accepted, so come prepared to spend.

## ZEMBU Map p88 Souvenirs

☎ 5211-7504; Michoacán s/n; **M** Patriotismo  
You can buy your hubble-bubble pipe direct from Cairo here (M\$675), plus the flower and fruit tobaccos, including rose, kiwi, melon, lemon and grape (M\$50). Alternatively, purchase a puff (or three) for around M\$20.

# top picks

## ARTESANÍA & CRAFTS

- Arte Mexicano Para el Mundo (p121)
- Nacional Monte de Piedad (p121)
- Fonart (p122)
- Casa del Coleccionista (opposite)
- Rinconcito Maya (opposite)

## ROMA

In comparison to Condesa, Roma is grid-system straightforward, with plenty of restaurant- and retail-therapy appeal spread along attractive leafy streets. Like its neighbor, Roma is interspersed with some stunning Art Deco architecture and is becoming increasingly well known for its dynamic art scene (p184).

### CHÍC BY ACCIDENT Map pp92-3 Antiques

☎ 5514-5723; Colima 180; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 5pm Sat; **M** Insurgentes

Featured in stylish *wallpaper\** magazine, French owner Emmanuel Picault has a fascinating collection of 20th-century furniture and objects here, ranging from a quirky giant walrus to a sumptuous abstractly designed quilt. Picault has published a book on contemporary furniture with Philippe Starck (*Book by Accident*). The adjacent showroom, Sex By Accident, concentrates on the erotica in art and sculpture.

### ARTE PREHISPÁNICO Map pp92-3 Artesanía

☎ 5574-7202; Córdoba 148; ☎ 11am-7pm Tue-Sat, **M** Insurgentes

This is the place to pick up your Aztec mask or sculpture; the copies here are excellent, as good as those at any museum. Other *artesanías irresistibles* include the woven wraps from Chiapas and the reasonably-priced *Día de Muertos* figures from Michoacán.

### LIBRERÍA TEOREMA Map pp92-3 Books

☎ 5525-2188; Álvaro Obregón 153; **M** Insurgentes One of several secondhand bookstores on this stretch, with shelves stretching as far as the eye can see, packed with dusty titles. Dig around (or ask the appropriately

elderly owner) where the English books are; there are a few, particularly cookbooks.

### LEMUR Map pp92-3 Boutique

☎ 3547-2182; Jalapa 85; **M** Insurgentes This funky store sells original toys, clothes and accessories by brands like Insight and Modern Amusement, plus a streetwise range of slogan T-shirts, shiny bags, and made to stand out (and on) shoes and boots.

### EL CIGARRITO Map pp92-3 Cigars

☎ 5511-8392; Oaxaca 116; **M** Insurgentes According to convivial owner Carlos, this is the only cigar store in Mexico City – indeed Mexico! – that carries such a wide range of *puros*, imported from the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua and Cuba, plus local Mexican stock.

### LA TRUFFE Map pp92-3 Food

☎ 5511-3949; Orizaba 101; **M** Insurgentes Lots of imported and local gourmet goodies, including cheese, wine, pasta, mustards, pickles, jams, dried chilies, organic marmalades and jams. La Truffe also organizes wine tasting events.

### ELFOS Map pp92-3 Souvenirs

☎ 2454-3118; Guanajuato 202; **M** Insurgentes If you believe in fairies (it happens!), this shop will delight. There are shelves and shelves of models crafted in Alicante, Spain. They are fabulously made and up to 41cm high, choose from Dagowill (protector of children), Gaer (good for your love life), Dagda (for wealth and health) and many more for those seeking total ethereal coverage.

## COYOACÁN

As one of the most charming neighborhoods in the city, Coyoacán is increasingly catering to its admiring visitors with intriguing small shops, which fit in well with the aesthetic appeal of the place. Some of the best are located around the central Jardín del Centenario.

### ALEGRA Map p95 Artesanía

☎ 5658-4482; Malitzin 6; ☎ 11am-9pm; **M** Viveros

A small space crammed with textiles, crafts and jewelry, including beaded bags, leather

belts with colorful ceramic-painted buckles and unusual earrings and brooches decorated with tiny pressed flowers.

### ARTESANÍAS SOLER ARUMI

Map p95 Artesanía

Francisco Sosa 349; **M** Viveros

This hole-in-the wall sells classic and modern designed frames, bowls, plates, teapots, candlesticks – you name it – made out of pewter so shiny you can see your reflection.

### CASA DEL COLECCIONISTA

Map p95 Artesanía & Antiques

☎ 5658-7099; Francisco Sosa 1; **M** Viveros

A treasure-trove of local crafts, including miniatures, silver jewelry and beaded bags. There are also antiques and collectables here, like gaudily-painted tin trays from '50s cantinas and brightly decorated gourds.

### GANDHI Map p95 Books

☎ 2625-0606; [www.gandhi.com.mx](http://www.gandhi.com.mx); Felipe Carrillo Puerto 6; **M** Viveros

Yet another branch of this excellent bookshop with a solid selection of fiction and nonfiction with both English and Spanish titles. Gandhi also sells DVDs and magazines. Note that there are two more Gandhi branches in nearby San Ángel.

### NALANDA LIBROS Map p95 Books

☎ 5554-7522; Centenario 16; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Fri **M** Viveros

This well-established bookstore specializes in esoteric and religious books, with a healthy selection in English. There are DVDs of sacred music to put you in the mellow mood.

### AYLLU Map p95 Boutique

☎ 5538-8564; Francisco Sosa 9; ☎ 11am-8pm; **M** Viveros

This local designer has come up with a cool and comfortable line of women's fashion, using all-cotton fabrics in colors like salmon, Mediterranean blue and cream. Embroidered shawls complete the flowing summery look with the prices more off-the-peg than off-the-wall.

### MINERALIA COYOACÁN Map p95 Jewelry

☎ 5659-5157; Ortega 32; ☎ 11am-9pm; **M** Viveros

The name says it all; this shop has two showrooms lined by shelves of wonderful stones, painted seeds and semiprecious

# top picks

## FOOD & WINE

- Briguetta (p127)
- Bodega de Quesos (p127)
- La Europea (p123)
- La Villa de Madrid (p125)

gems. Choose several different colored strings and buy the clasp separately to create a show-stopping original piece.

### PASAJE COYOACÁN Map p95 Souvenirs

☎ 5659-2432; Cuauhtémoc; **M** Viveros

A great browsing space if you have no idea what you are looking for but the peso purse is heavy. Peruse local pottery, woven and embroidered bags, straw and knitted hats, funky lights, rugs, candles, dried flowers and colorful reeds and furniture.

## SAN ÁNGEL

Follow the shopping baskets here on Saturdays when the classy Bazar Sábado attracts the crowds, including arty types, for the original canvases displayed in the Plaza del Carmen and Plaza San Jacinto. The streets are also lined with vendors, selling everything from brightly colored woven baskets to intricately beaded bowls and decorative pieces.

### CASA AZUL Map p101 Artesanía & Antiques

☎ 5550-3223; Plaza del Carmen 25; **M** Miguel Ángel de Quevedo

Walk up the wide steps to the terrace and grand entrance of this colonial-style grand house, which today creates a fitting showcase for antiques and crafts. There is a beguiling combination of kitsch, historic and current day *artesanía* items spread over three large creaking rooms.

### RINCONCITO MAYA Map p95 Artesanía

☎ 5424-5925; Plaza San Jacinto 3; ☎ 10am-6pm Sat; **M** Miguel Ángel de Quevedo

These stunning quilts from Chiapas, brightly colored and hand stitched, all tell a folksy (or frightening) story. Plus there are blankets, shawls and other textiles from Yucatán, Guatemala and Honduras. The prices are up there, but so is the quality.

## EL TALLER DEL MUEBLE

Map p95 **Artesanía & Furniture**

☎ 5616-6121; Madero 8a; 🕒 9.30am-8pm

📍 Miguel Ángel de Quevedo

Despite the name, this shop sells far more than just furniture – which may not fit in your hand luggage. There are some unusual pottery and ceramic pieces, including folksy painted plates and cups, Aztec sculpture copies, wall hangings and unusual masks. Prices are fair.

**GLOBAL BOOK** Map p95 **Books**

☎ 5550 2383; [www.globalbook.com.mx](http://www.globalbook.com.mx); Centro Comercial Plaza del Carmen; 📍 Miguel Ángel de Quevedo

A rare all-English-language bookshop with a solid collection of literature, bonkbusters, bestsellers, coffee-table tomes on art and design, children's books and travel guides, including Lonely Planet; includes a cafeteria.

**PLAZA LORETO** Map p95 **Shopping Center**

Altamirano 46; 🚏 Metrobus Doctor Gálvez

Plaza Loreto, a 600m walk south of Plaza San Jacinto, is an unusually attractive shopping mall converted from an old paper

factory. Several patios and courtyards are set between the brick buildings and it's a lot more than just a place to shop. You'll find a mini-amphitheater for free concerts and puppet shows; two multiscreen cinemas (one of them, Cinemanía, devoted to classic and art-house movies and endowed with a nice little lobby bar); a cabaret club, La Planta de Luz (p174); an excellent art museum (p102), and one of the city's best restaurants, Taberna de León (p154). There are plenty of up-market shops as well, including boutiques and jewelers, plus a branch of Sanborns and the Mixup music store.

## XOCHIMILCO

Map pp112-13

The central market here is spread between two buildings: the older **Xochitl Zona** (Map pp112-13), which mainly sells food, plus several stalls selling pottery, piñatas, bags and backpacks and cheaper off the peg clothing, plus an **annex** (Map pp112-13), famed for its colorful flower market. There is a reasonable *artesanía* market which runs most of the length of the *embarcaderos* (boat landings).

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