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SLEEPING

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SLEEPING

As a frequent destination for both Mexican and foreign visitors, the DF (Federal District) overflows with lodging options, from no-frills guesthouses to top-flight hotels. Some of the most affordable places are clustered in the Centro Histórico, the vibrant center of the city, while more luxurious accommodations are concentrated in the Zona Rosa and Polanco neighborhoods, with branches of some major international chains represented. Midrange lodgings, most featuring restaurants and bars, abound in the Alameda and Plaza de la República areas; they tend to trade character for neutral modern comfort. (Note that places with the word 'garage' on the sign generally cater to short-term trysting guests.) Those on a tight budget will find an increasing number of low-cost hostels, particularly in the center of town.

Accommodations listings in this chapter are ordered by neighborhood, then by price from most to least expensive based on the price of a standard double. Unlike in Mexico's coastal resorts, rates do not vary by season in the capital. Generally we've quoted rack rates, though business hotels customarily offer substantial discounts, especially during slow periods.

CENTRO HISTÓRICO

For most nonbusiness travelers, the historic center is the obvious place to stay, brimming with shops, museums, government palaces and historic buildings, some of which house hotels. Ongoing renovations of its infrastructure and preservation of its many historic edifices have boosted the zone's appeal, attracting more visitors and encouraging installation of more lodgings, restaurants and clubs. But despite the center's renaissance and consequent gentrification, it remains one of the more affordable areas, and superior deals can still be found.

Three upmarket hotels stand right on the Zócalo (the city's vast central plaza) while an equal number of budget hostels are within a block of the square. At least a dozen midrange options line Av 5 de Mayo and other streets west of the Zócalo.

GRAN HOTEL CIUDAD DE MÉXICO

Map pp48–9 Historic Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 1083-7700; www.granhotelciudadmexico.com.mx; Av 16 de Septiembre 82; s/d M\$1636/2691; **M** Zócalo; **P**

The Gran Hotel flaunts the French art nouveau style of the prerevolutionary era. Crowned high overhead by a stained-glass canopy crafted by Tiffany in 1908, the vast atrium is a fin-de-siècle fantasy of curved

balconies, original wrought-iron elevators and chirping birds in zoo-sized cages. Rooms do not disappoint by comparison: fringed curtains, plush armchairs and canopied king-size beds boast a belle époque opulence. The rooftop terrace takes full advantage of the Zócalo setting. Observing the huge Mexican flag flapping in the wind from this perch, you may well be moved to shout 'Viva México!'

HOLIDAY INN ZÓCALO

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$\$
☎ 5130-5130, 800-5521-2122; www.hotelescortes.com; Av 5 de Mayo 61; r from M\$1264; **M** Zócalo; **P**

Northernmost of the three upper-echelon hotels facing the Zócalo, the Holiday Inn seems the least pretentious, eschewing colonial trimmings for contemporary comfort. And its rooftop-terrace restaurant, looking straight at the Metropolitan Cathedral, ranks with those of its neighbors.

HOTEL MAJESTIC

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$\$
☎ 5521-8600; www.hotelmajestic.com.mx; Madero 73; r US\$135, ste from US\$172; **M** Zócalo; **P**

This Best Western franchise has a lot going for it, including an attractive colonial interior, an unbeatable location and perhaps the most panoramic terrace restaurant on the Zócalo. Rooms, however, are less fabulous than you'd expect for these prices.

NH CENTRO HISTÓRICO

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$\$
☎ 5130-1850; www.nh-hotels.com; Palma 42; r/suite incl breakfast M\$1551/1693; **M** Zócalo; **P**

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Riding the downtown development wave, Spanish chain NH placed one of its DF branches smack in the center. Lounges and rooms get a Euro-minimalist treatment normally associated with pricier digs. Spacious suites occupy the curved corners of the aerodynamically designed 1940s structure. Online rates are a terrific deal.

TULIP INN RITZ

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$
☎ 5130-0160; www.tulipinnritzmexico.com; Madero 30; r/ste M\$879/924; **M** Allende
Popular with touring European groups, who appreciate its prime location, simpatico staff and secure installations, the 78-year-old Ritz was recently spruced up by new overseers from the Netherlands. About half of the 120 large rooms overlook Madero or Bolívar, while the rest face a tranquil patio.

HOTEL CATEDRAL

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$
☎ 5518-5232; www.hotelcatedral.com.mx; Donceles 95; s/d M\$475/660; **M** Zócalo; **P**
Though short on colonial charm, this comfortable lodging has clearly considered its location, directly behind the Metropolitan Cathedral. South-facing rooms above the 4th floor offer reach-out-and-touch views of the colonial masterpiece, while units north take in stately Calle Donceles. Even if you get an interior room, you can lounge on the rooftop terraces, with cityscapes in all directions.

HOTEL GILLOW

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$
☎ 5518-1440; www.hotelgillow.com; Isabel la Católica 17; s/d M\$468/600; **M** Zócalo; **P**
A historic building with standard midrange facilities, the Gillow boasts old-fashioned service and spacious carpeted rooms around a sunlit central courtyard. For views, request an Av 5 de Mayo or Isabel la Católica unit. With its marble floors, chandeliers and stately, the lobby is a study in 1960s luxury.

HOTEL CANADÁ

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$\$
☎ 5518-2106; www.hotelcanada.com.mx; Calle 5 de Mayo 47; s/d M\$420/500; **M** Allende; **P**
This longstanding locale has performed a serious face-lift to boost its profile on hotel-packed Calle 5 de Mayo. Its smallish rooms have been done over tastefully, with fresh new carpets, peach-toned headboards and sepia photos of old Mexico. Affably gray-uniformed staff cater to a primarily business clientele, who may unwind in the TV amphitheater downstairs or quaff fresh-squeezed juices next door.

HOTEL CAPITOL

Map pp48–9 Historic Hotel \$
☎ 5512-0460; www.hotelcapitol.com.mx; República de Uruguay 12; s/d M\$320/400; **M** San Juan Letrán
Opposite the computer shopping center, this friendly relic of a hotel first opened its door a century ago as the Gran Hotel. Though it's lost some of its grandness since then, it still offers plain rooms around a central hall with fountain. Romantically inclined guests often opt for the Jacuzzi-equipped suites.

HOSTEL MUNDO JOVEN CATEDRAL

Map p48–9 Hostel \$
☎ 5518-1726; www.hostelcatedral.com; República de Guatemala 4; dm incl breakfast M\$140, d with shared bathroom M\$380; **M** Zócalo;
Backpacker central in Mexico City, the capital's only HI affiliate is abuzz with a global rainbow of young travelers. Every facility you might need is here, the location couldn't be more central and the place is cordially managed. Four- and six-person dorms have polished hardwood floors, sturdy bunk beds and corresponding lockers. Other useful features include a youth travel agency, a relaxed ground-level café, and an excellent rooftop sun deck with bar and lounge chairs.

HOSTAL VIRREYES

Map pp48–9 Hotel \$
☎ 5521-4180; www.hostalvirreyes.com.mx; Izazaga 8; dm M\$120, s/d M\$320/370; **M** Salto del Agua;
A prestige hotel in the past, the Virreyes has quite naturally morphed into a hostel-student residence. Decor is bare bones but dorms provide plenty of breathing room for a half-dozen occupants and have proportionately large bathrooms done up in Talavera tile. The lobby lounge, which retains

PRICE GUIDE

\$\$\$	over M\$1000 double
\$\$	M\$400–M\$1000 double
\$	under M\$400 double

some of the old hotel's more attractive elements, serves as an occasional live music venue, while the retro-fitted restaurant has a decent *comida corrida* (set lunch).

HOTEL AZORES Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5521-5220; www.hotelazores.com; República de Brasil 25; s/d from M\$300/360; **M** Zócalo; **P** Just off the fascinating Plaza Santo Domingo, the uncharacteristically modern Azores boasts a cheerily designed and scrupulously maintained interior. The 65 rooms are neither large nor luxurious but are in excellent shape. Just eight overlook the street through picture windows. The rest give onto a pair of bright interior courtyards, the lower one containing the pleasant lobby bar.

HOSTAL MONEDA Map pp48–9 Hostel \$

☎ 5522-5803; www.hostalmoneda.com.mx; Moneda 8; dm incl breakfast & dinner M\$120-155, d M\$355; **M** Zócalo; **Q** On one of the city's most exuberant and historic streets, the Moneda is an altogether more modest affair than the nearby Hostel Mundo Joven Catedral, though it remains a favored stop on the international backpackers' circuit. Chief among its assets are a well-informed, bilingual staff and a terrific multipurpose rooftop, suitable for sending emails or swinging in a hammock.

HOSTAL AMIGO Map pp48–9 Hostel \$

☎ 5512-3464; www.hostelamigo.com; Isabel la Católica 61; dm incl breakfast & supper M\$115, d with shared bathroom M\$333; **M** Isabel la Católica; **Q** Occupying a 250-year-old former nuns' residence, this recently inaugurated hostel retains some of the original architectural features. The atmosphere is aggressively casual, and if you like to party, you'll find plenty of amigos and amigas who share your interest. All that partying has taken a toll on the facilities, though, and the dorms can get mighty crowded.

HOTEL PRINCIPAL Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5521-1333; www.hotelprincipal.com.mx; Bolívar 29; s/d/tr M\$225/315/410; **M** Allende A longtime favorite with frugal travelers, the Principal has a helpful staff with plenty of experience. Typical of the old Centro lodgings, it boasts enormous rooms with high ceilings surrounding a plant-draped

central hall. A newly installed skylight and fresh paint considerably brighten the environment. Cafés and clubs dot the street.

HOTEL ROBLE Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5522-7830; www.hotelroble.com; República de Uruguay 109; s/d/tr M\$275/310/520; **M** Zócalo; **Q** Used mostly by Mexicans visiting the capital on a shopping spree, the Roble is terrifically convenient to the numerous stores just south of the Zócalo. Despite its modern, concrete-block facade, however, the rooms could use an upgrade, with chipped furniture and stale-smelling carpet. A downstairs restaurant remains busy throughout the day.

HOTEL WASHINGTON Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5512-3502; Av 5 de Mayo 54; s/d/tr M\$240/300/340; **M** Allende If you're sticking to a budget but don't want to sacrifice comfort and prefer to be right in the middle of things, the Washington will do nicely – and you'll likely be amid similar-minded travelers. Be sure to get a balcony room facing Av 5 de Mayo or Calle Palma; airless interior units are best avoided.

MEXICO CITY HOSTEL Map pp48–9 Hostel \$

☎ 5512-3666; www.mexicocityhostel.com; República de Brasil 8; dm incl breakfast from M\$100, s/d M\$200/300; **M** Zócalo; **Q** Steps from the Zócalo, this colonial structure has been artfully restored, with original wood beams and stone walls as a backdrop for modern energy-efficient facilities. In the spacious dorms, three or four sturdy bunk beds stand on terracotta floors. Immaculate bathrooms trimmed with *azulejos* (coloured tiles) amply serve around 100 occupants. Rates include a buffet breakfast.

HOTEL RIOJA Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5521-8333; Av 5 de Mayo 45; s/d from M\$220/250; **M** Allende The Rioja is a well-maintained lodging in the middle of everything, and the quality of its facilities matches those of places at twice the price. Front rooms (slightly pricier) have balconies suitable for observing the activity on Av 5 de Mayo. Interior units, opening on an echoing central court, tend to be dark but guarantee a peaceful night's sleep.

HOTEL JUÁREZ Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5512-6929; hoteljuarez@prodigy.net.mx; 1er Callejón de 5 de Mayo; s/d M\$190/250; **M** Allende Nestled in an L-shaped alley, the Juárez is another incredibly cheap but perfectly good choice in the thick of things, though just out-of-the-way enough to ensure a *tranquilo* night's sleep. True, its feng shui may need an overhaul, but the shoestring travelers who regularly check in here don't seem to mind.

HOTEL SAN ANTONIO Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5518-1625; fax 5512-9906; 2a Callejón 5 de Mayo 29; d with private/shared bathroom M\$220/200, tr M\$320; **M** Allende Located inside an L-shaped passage linking Av 5 de Mayo with Palma, the Hotel San Antonio gives easy access to downtown shopping and sights while remaining slightly aloof from the bustle. Rooms are on the small side and face either the little-used alley or the whitewashed interior court. Join the mayor and his pals for breakfast at El Cardenal (p135), just off the Palma entry.

HOTEL ISABEL Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5518-1213; www.hotel-isabel.com.mx; Isabel la Católica 63; s/d/tr with private bathroom M\$220/320/460, s/d with shared bathroom M\$150/220; **M** Isabel la Católica; **Q** The Isabel is a long-time budget travelers' favorite, and it's easy to see why. A few blocks from the Zócalo, it offers large, well-scrubbed rooms with old but sturdy furniture, high ceilings and great balconies, plus a hostel-like social scene. The classic arrangement has three floors of rooms around a skylit patio festooned with lots of plants.

HOTEL ZAMORA Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5512-0245; hotelzamora@prodigy.net.mx; Av 5 de Mayo 50; s/d with private bathroom M\$175/275, s/d with shared bathroom M\$130/220; **M** Allende Absolutely no frills here, but it's clean, friendly and cheap. Rooms, around a skylit hall, have high ceilings with painted wood beams, plus there are springy mattresses; bathrooms range from primitive to nicely tiled. Ask for a front room: the balconies over Av 5 de Mayo are worth the price alone.

HOTEL SEÑORIAL Map pp48–9 Hotel \$

☎ 5709-3340; www.residenciaseniorial.com; Callejón de la Esperanza 8; s/d per month M\$1800/2150; **M** Salto del Agua; **P** **Q**

An old 'by-the-hour' hotel converted into a student residence, the Señorial is a haven for art students, but is open to anyone with an ISIC card. Rooms are austere, but students with a month to spend in the capital might find it an interesting option. Adjacent is the Plaza de las Vizcainas, a pleasant (though sometimes derelict) patch of green.

ALAMEDA CENTRAL & AROUND

The area south of the Alameda Central abounds with unremarkable but perfectly comfortable midrange hotels, especially along Revillagigedo and Luis Moya. Some of these places customarily fill up with package tour groups from Europe. Like the Centro Histórico, this section is undergoing major renovations, with the recently built Sheraton as a symbol of its new ascendance, though pockets of neglect are reminders of the 1985 earthquake that devastated the zone. Though by day the neighborhood bustles with shoppers, after dark it quiets down considerably and, apart from its small Chinatown district, offers little incentive to wander.

HOTEL SHERATON CENTRO HISTÓRICO Map p64 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5130-5300; www.sheraton.com.mx; Juárez 70; r from US\$220; **M** Hidalgo; **P** **Q** **R** **S** **T** **U** **V** **W** **X** **Y** **Z** A cornerstone of this downtown redevelopment project, the sleek Sheraton towers above quaint Alameda Central. Most travelers are here on business, but anyone desiring a dose of comfort and sublime cityscapes should be more than satisfied. The 27-floor hotel contains more than 450 rooms, all above the 9th floor to maximize views. Classic rooms come in a range of soothing colors, from cobalt blue to cappuccino. The busy complex also boasts a branch of El Cardenal restaurant (p135) serving up *alta cocina mexicana* (see p133), and a huge fitness center with saunas, a massage clinic and a terrace café.

HOTEL DE CORTÉS Map p64 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5518-2181; www.hoteldecortes.com.mx; Hidalgo 85; traditional r/ste M\$1385/1962, Virreinal M\$2398/2992; **M** Hidalgo; **X** **Q**

Once a hospice for pilgrims of the Augustinian order, this World Hotels property has a long history of sheltering travelers. Rooms encircle a lovely late-18th-century patio, where a buffet breakfast is served each morning and mariachis perform nightly. If you don't mind the price tag, staying here will give you a genuine taste of colonial Mexico.

HOTEL SAN FRANCISCO Map p64 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5533-1032; sanfrancisco@hotelesdelangel.com; Luis Moya 11; s/d M\$700/760; **M** Juárez; **P**

With buildings springing up all around it, this longstanding Alameda tower has changed little over the years, though its views are now obstructed. Popular with Australian and European groups, it boasts spacious rooms with old-fashioned furniture and seriously dated lobby decor. Your best bet for Alameda views are the north-facing units above the 11th floor.

HOTEL MONTE REAL Map p64 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5518-1150; www.hotelmontereal.com.mx; Revillagigedo 23; s/d/tr M\$650/700/800; **M** Juárez; **P** ☒ ☑

Handily located across the way from the new Museo de Artes Populares (p63) and down the street from the Teatro Metropolitan (p171), this nine-level block makes a fine place to lay your head. Mexican handicrafts spice up the busy lobby and otherwise bland though well-maintained rooms. A genuinely cheerful staff has ample experience attending to foreign guests, especially French and German groups.

HOTEL MARLOWE Map p64 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5521-9540; www.hotelmarrowe.com.mx, in Spanish; Independencia 17; s/d/tr M\$480/600/740; **M** San Juan de Letrán; **P** ☒ ☑

The best of many midrange options in the south-of-Alameda zone, the peach-concrete Marlowe stands just across from Chinatown's pagoda gate. Above a bright, airy lobby are spacious, rooms colored salmon and champagne, with good carpet, colorful bedspreads, soothing art and inset lighting. Fitness freaks will appreciate the top floor gym-with-a-view.

HOTEL FLEMING Map p64 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5510-4530; www.hotelfleming.com.mx; Revillagigedo 35; s/d/tr M\$360/460/490; **M** Juárez; **P** ☑

Just a block from the metro, the Fleming is one of the better deals in the zone. Though typically uninspiring in design or decor, the spacious, peach-toned rooms have all the comforts of pricier places in this category, plus ceiling fans and attractive painted ceiling beams. For some reason it's popular with French groups, who congregate in the decent ground-level restaurant.

HOTEL SAN DIEGO Map p64 Hotel \$

☎ 5510-3523; Luis Moya 98; s/d M\$250/400; **M** Balderas

Though a bit far from the action, this generic option two blocks east of La Ciudadela should appeal to peso-pinchers unwilling to rough it. Above the lobby's imitation leather sofas and plastic plants are bright, decent-sized rooms with furniture of recent vintage and newly tiled bathrooms. Some may be put off by the antiseptic cleaning odor.

PLAZA DE LA REPÚBLICA & SAN RAFAEL

Farther from the Zócalo, the area around the Monument to the Revolution is awash in hotels of every category, with a number of by-the-hour dives interspersed amid the business-class establishments. Unaffected by the wave of development sweeping the Centro and Reforma corridor, the semiresidential zone offers glimpses of Chilango neighborhood life. Schoolchildren and office workers share the streets with hookers, troubadours and visitors from the provinces – add the strains of an organ grinder and you have all the elements for a neorealist film.

HOTEL CASA BLANCA Map p71 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5096-4500; www.hotel-casablanca.com.mx; Lafragua 7; s/d M\$1080/1350, ste from M\$1588; **M** Metrobus Tabacalera; **P** ☒ ☑

Here's a five-star hotel with all the trimmings for much less than the chains. A sexy new lobby bar jazzes up the otherwise '60s ambience, with a lavender color scheme in the 270 rooms. Bonus: a rooftop pool with adjacent lounge.

HOTEL JENA Map p71 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5097-0277; www.hoteljena.com.mx; Terán 12; s/d M\$667/761, ste M\$1287; **M** Hidalgo; **P** ☒ ☑

Not as tall as it looks (the imposing black tower is strictly for show), the Jena has huge rooms that are among the most luxurious in this range. Wood paneling is a key element in the decor, lending everything a boardroom burnish, including the snappy cocktail lounge. An indoor pool and gym are additional attractions. The hotel is just a block and a half from Reforma.

HOTEL ASTOR Map p71 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5148-2644; hotel.astor@mexico.com; Caso 83; s/d M\$440/580; **M** Metrobus Reforma; **P** ☒ ☑

Though a bit far from the action, this sleek and sterile block, which seems designed for anonymity – the desk clerk sits inside a glass booth and cars huddle discreetly in an interior patio. Nevertheless, the Astor offers large, modern rooms that are as comfortable as they're unremarkable. Perhaps their most useful feature is the soundproof windows that muffle the traffic streaming down Caso. A block east is the classic Gran Premio, a neighborhood café with a vintage Italian espresso maker and great pastries.

HOTEL MAYALAND Map p71 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5566-6066; www.hotelmayaland.com.mx; Antonio Caso 23; s/d M\$430/560; **M** Juárez; **P** ☑

Standing on a rather sterile street two blocks south of the Monument to the Revolution, this business-oriented hotel has well-maintained facilities with a Maya motif. Typically neutral-modern rooms feature textured pink walls, floral canvasses and inset lighting.

HOTEL MÓNACO Map p71 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5566-8333; www.hotel-monaco.com.mx; Guerrero 12; s/d M\$485/520; **M** Hidalgo; **P** ☒ ☑

Steps from the metro and opposite cute Plaza San Fernando, this refurbished older hotel stands at the lower edge of run-down Colonia Guerrero but is more attuned to the nearby Reforma business corridor. Bellboys in blue suits proudly escort you down marble-floored hallways with piped-in muzak to your neatly furnished, color-coordinated room.

HOTEL NEW YORK Map p71 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5566-9700; Edison 45; s/d M\$310/520; **M** Revolución; **P** ☑

A few blocks northeast of Plaza de la República, this is an upscale option in a zone

cramped with cut-rate hotels. Though rooms are on the small side, they're a cut above your average sterile business hotel, with bold primary colors and stylish furniture. Rates include breakfast and wi-fi.

PALACE HOTEL Map p71 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5566-2400; fax 5535-7520; Ignacio Ramírez 7; s/d M\$351/409; **M** Revolución; **P**

Run by a bunch of gregarious Asturians, the Palace has large, neatly maintained rooms in an appealing range of blue tones. Broad balconies give terrific views down palm-lined Ramírez to the Plaza de la Revolución. Cash-paying guests get substantial discounts.

HOTEL ÉDISON Map p71 Hotel \$

☎ 5566-0933; Edison 106; s/d/tr M\$219/299/359; **M** Revolución; **M**

Beyond the grim, bunkerlike exterior, accommodations face a rectangular garden surrounded by pre-Hispanic motifs. Despite faded wallpaper and dated fixtures, rooms are amply sized, with massive closets and marble washbasins. Should you need them, there's a bakery and a laundry across the street.

CASA DE LOS AMIGOS Map p71 Hostel \$

☎ 5705-0521; www.casadelosamigos.org; Mariscal 132; dm M\$100, r with shared bathroom M\$290; **M** Revolución; ☒ ☑

Not technically a hostel, the Quaker-run Casa is primarily a residence for NGOs, researchers and others involved in peace and human-rights efforts, but it welcomes walk-in travelers. It attracts a more serious individual than the average hostel and thus has a lower-key atmosphere. Meditation sessions, discussions with community members and Spanish conversation are available to guests, who may volunteer to help run the Casa for a reduced rate. A hearty breakfast (M\$15) is served Monday to Friday in the ground-floor dining room. There's a two-night minimum stay.

HOTEL OXFORD Map p71 Hotel \$

☎ 5566-0500; Mariscal 67; s/d M\$120/200; **M** Revolución

Some find a special allure in this art deco remnant of 1940s Mexico City which sits on the tranquil Plaza Buenavista behind the Museo Nacional de San Carlos. Others just call it a dive. Rooms 210 and 310 are best,

with handsome rounded balconies facing the plaza and goings-on within. If it's seedy charm you're after, the Oxford's bar will do nicely, and they'll send up drinks until 4am.

ZONA ROSA, CUAUHTÉMOC & JUÁREZ

Foreign businesspeople and tourists check in at the numerous glitzy hotels in this international commerce and nightlife area that's also the center of the city's gay culture. Though it's hardly representative of DF life, some may find the Pink Zone a reassuringly global bubble, where foreigners can move about without eliciting undue interest. Most of the international hotel chains have branches within the zone proper and along Paseo de la Reforma, while an assortment of less-expensive Mexican-run establishments dot the quieter streets of Colonia Cuauhtémoc, north of Reforma, and Juárez, east of Insurgentes.

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL

Map pp74-5 Luxury Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5230-1818; www.fourseasons.com/mexico; Paseo de la Reforma 500; r US\$370; **M** Sevilla; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

One of the city's most elegant lodgings, the Four Seasons was designed to resemble a French-Mexican late-19th-century structure, an anomaly amid Paseo de la Reforma's glass-and-steel monoliths. Rather than flirting with modernity, the hotel goes for a classic opulence, from the lobby salons, with their Louis XV armchairs and settees, to the aristocratically furnished guest rooms, with an average 56 sq meters of floor space. Most of these face a beautifully landscaped central courtyard, a mix of tropical foliage and French renaissance.

SHERATON MARÍA ISABEL HOTEL

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5242-5555; www.sheraton.com/mariaisabel; Reforma 325; r from US\$252; **M** Insurgentes **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Overlooking the Independence monument and next door to the US embassy, the Sheraton's two towers have accommodated businesspeople, diplomats and journalists for over three decades. Among its varied attractions are a rooftop pool, fitness center, two lighted tennis courts, nightly mariachis and a Starbucks branch.

SAN MARINO HOTEL-SUITES

Map pp74-5 Serviced Apartment \$\$\$

☎ 5207-9060; www.sanmarino.com.mx; Río Tiber 107; r M\$1795; **M** Insurgentes; **P** ☒ ☑ ☑ Just up from the Ángel monument along a major northbound artery, this locale has slickly styled rooms – rather than suites – with faux-wood floors and marshmallow mattresses. The effect is undercut by the chintzy kitchen, but execs here are more likely to seek nourishment in the grotto-like restaurant downstairs. The hotel routinely offers hefty discounts for walk-in customers.

HOTEL IMPERIAL

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5705-4911; www.hotelimperial.com.mx; Paseo de la Reforma 64; r/stc M\$1521/2457; **M** Hidalgo; ☒ ☑ ☑

The dictator Porfirio Díaz unwrapped this cake wedge of a building in 1904, and it remains a refreshingly stylish structure alongside the Columbus traffic circle. Spacious suites occupy the upper turret levels while 50 standard rooms line the Paseo de la Reforma and Av Morelos sides. Unfortunately, room decor fails to match the building's Porfiriato splendor.

SUITES DEL ÁNGEL

Map pp74-5 Serviced Apartment \$\$\$

☎ 5242-9500; www.hotelesdelangel.mexico-hoteles.com; Río Lerma 162; ste M\$1460; **M** Insurgentes; **P** ☒ ☑ ☑

Sister to the nearby Hotel Del Ángel, this is designed for execs on longer stays. It's a great deal considering its central location and ample accommodations. Tri-chamber suites include a few sofas, huge closets, three TVs (one's in the bathroom should you need it), Jacuzzi and full kitchen. Front rooms have balconies overlooking traffic-clogged Calle Río Lerma.

HOTEL SEVILLA PALACE

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5705-2800; www.sevillapalace.com.mx; Paseo de la Reforma 105; r M\$1328, ste from M\$1907; **M** Allende; ☒ ☑ ☑

While it won't win any awards for originality, this monolithic structure is built for comfort, with over 400 air-conditioned rooms featuring queen-size beds and cheery abstract art. Soaring up through the central atrium in a transparent vertigo-inducing elevator, you reach the 23rd floor, with a swimming pool beneath a

protective canopy and a thatched *palapa* (thatch-roofed, open-sided beach shelter) for cocktails. Both the monumental Plaza de la Revolución and pleasant Parque Sulivan with its Sunday art market are within walking distance.

HOTEL GENEVE

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5080-0800; www.hotelgeneve.com.mx; Londres 130; r from M\$1355; **M** Insurgentes; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☑

Celebrating its centennial, this Zona Rosa institution strives to maintain a belle époque ambience in contrast to the globalized mishmash around it. The lobby breathes class, with lily-of-the-valley chandeliers, oil canvases and dark wood paneling, as well as access to a skylit Sanborns café flanked by corkscrew-shaped columns. Rooms feature handsome carved wood headboards and colonial dressers and nightstands.

HOTEL MISIÓN REFORMA

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5141-0442; www.hotelesmision.com.mx; Morelos 110; r M\$1300, ste M\$2303; **M** Metrobus Reforma; **P** ☒ ☑ ☑

One of several large business hotels around the Columbus traffic circle, this terracotta monolith is a branch of a Mexican chain. Its spacious rooms get liberal doses of color and comfort and afford fine views of the grand boulevard below. When it's time to turn in, inner shutters block out noise and light.

HOTEL DEL ÁNGEL

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5533-1032; www.hotelesdelangel.mexico-hoteles.com; Río Lerma 154; s/d/tr M\$761/878/995; **M** pesero Reforma-Metro Hidalgo; **P** ☒ ☑ ☑

Like the area, this hotel is in transition. Construction of the HSBC building next door has robbed the once-formidable tower of views of the iconic monument it is named for. But rather than brood, the hotel is jazzing up its facilities from the top down, trading the ho-hum wicker motif (still in evidence on the lower floors) for pomo furniture and fixtures in the uppermost units.

HOTEL MISIÓN ZONA ROSA

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5533-0535; www.hotelesmision.com.mx; Napoles 62; r incl breakfast M\$877; **M** Insurgentes; **P** ☒ ☑ ☑

Rising like a pink pylon above a nondescript section of Colonia Juárez, this business-class hotel offers small neatly appointed suites with classy ceiling moldings, Talavera pottery and a raised wireless work area. A small gym on the top level affords cityscape views. Skip the complimentary breakfast and make for Gabi's, a popular café and gallery of coffee paraphernalia just down the street.

HOTEL CITYEXPRESS

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5208-1717; www.cityexpress.com.mx; Havre 21; r incl breakfast M\$807; **M** Metrobus Hamburgo; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☑

A no-nonsense business-class hotel in a green glass tower, the new Cityexpress emphasizes comfort and functionality – a place to crash between deals. But the decor is a cut above the neutral modern favored by most hotels in this price class, with designer bedspreads, well-chosen art and captivating views of the nearby office towers springing up in this transitional zone.

HOTEL MARÍA CRISTINA

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5703-1212; www.hotelmariacristina.com.mx; Río Lerma 31; s/d from M\$695/775; **M** Insurgentes; **P** ☒ ☑ ☑

Dating from the 1930s, this facsimile of an Andalusian estate, north of Reforma, makes an appealing retreat, particularly the adjacent bar with its own patio seating. Rooms lack the lobby's colonial splendor, but are generally bright and comfortable.

HOTEL PRIM

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5141-1330; www.hotelprim.com; Versalles 46; s/d/tr incl breakfast M\$588/672/756; **M** Cuauhtémoc

The hulking Prim does not present an attractive facade, but it's decent value and a quick hike from Reforma, the Zona Rosa or Colonia Roma. The junior suites are the best deal, with cozy living rooms, huge beds and two bathrooms. Several hot nightspots are within walking distance, but if you don't feel like going out, the hotel's piano bar hosts schmaltzy crooners Tuesday to Saturday nights.

HOTEL BRISTOL

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5533-6060; www.hotelbristol.com.mx; Plaza Necaxa 17; s/d M\$563/656; **M** pesero Reforma-Metro Hidalgo; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☑ A good-value option in the pleasant and central Cuauhtémoc neighborhood, the

Bristol caters primarily to business travelers, offering quality carpet, a soothing color scheme and cordial service. Guests should expect to rub shoulders with an array of lower-echelon salarymen from throughout the Republic. They'll be checking their email in the small business center, flipping through the newspaper in the lobby lounge or having lunch with clients at the above-average restaurant.

HOTEL PRINCIPADO Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5233-2944; www.hoteldelprincipado.com.mx; Londres 42; s/d/tr incl breakfast M\$500/650/750; **M** Insurgentes; **P**

Conveniently poised between the Zona Rosa and Colonia Roma, this friendly little place makes a nice cocoon. It has recently adjusted its look, replacing the carpet with faux wood floors, installing light-stained furniture and updating its analog keys with cards. A gratis breakfast buffet includes fruit, *chilaquiles* (fried tortilla chips with scrambled eggs or sauce, often with grated cheese on top) and much more. Look for weekend discounts.

CASA GONZÁLEZ Map pp74-5 B&B \$\$\$

☎ 5514-3302; casa.gonzalez@prodigy.net.mx; Río Sena 69; s/d from M\$428/588; **M** Insurgentes;

A family-run operation for nearly a century, the Casa is a perennial hit with mature travelers. Set around several patios and semiprivate terraces festooned with colorful plants and flowers, the general ambience is extraordinarily *tranquilo*. Original portraits and landscapes decorate the rooms, apparently done by a guest in lieu of payment. Guests meet over breakfast, served on old china in the dining room.

HOTEL SEVILLA Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5566-1866; www.sevilla.com.mx; Serapio Rendón 124; tradicional s/d M\$276/445, nueva M\$459/573; Metrobus Reforma; **P**

Opposite the Jardín del Arte this oft-recommended business hotel is divided into traditional and new sections. Rooms in the former have '60s paneling; those in the latter are more slickly appointed with air-conditioning and hair dryers.

HOTEL COMPOSTELA Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5566-0733; www.hotelcompostela.com.mx; Sullivan 35; tradicional s/d M\$299/320, nueva M\$410/475; Metrobus Reforma; **P**

There are two sections occupying this large rectangular block across the way from the Jardín del Arte: traditional and new (though 'newer' might be more accurate). Though only slightly pricier, the units in the latter section have much more pizzazz, with bigger bathrooms, cheerier colors and lots of mirrors.

HOSTAL CASSA VIEJA Map pp74-5 Hostel \$

☎ 5208-3004; www.hostalcasavieja.com.mx; Cerrada de Londres 7; dm/s/d incl breakfast M\$120/250/320; **M** Sevilla; **P**

Just outside Metro Sevilla is this little-known guesthouse, essentially a second-floor apartment outfitted for travelers. Four two-bed rooms and one four-bunk dorm share a large blue bathroom; another room occupies the former maid's quarters on the roof. Guests from all over congregate in the simply decorated sitting room or put together snacks in the kitchen.

VERSALLES 104 Map pp74-5 Hostel \$

☎ 5705-3247; www.versalles104.com; Versalles 104; dm/d from M\$115/240; **M** Cuauhtémoc;

Friendly American-Mexican couple Tory and Livier have reconceived a Porfirio Díaz-era home as a boutique hostel-cultural center, contributing their own quirky design elements, and it's a hit with young, mostly European, travelers. Two rooms around a small patio are outfitted as mixed-gender dorms sharing a single tiny bathroom. Otherwise, you might opt for one of a pair of wood-floored private rooms upstairs. Much of the social interaction takes place in the front-end café-theater, where espresso and Japanese elixir tonics are dispensed.

BOSQUE DE CHAPULTEPEC

Checking in alongside the Bosque de Chapultepec makes it easy to appreciate the vast swath of greenery and its multifaceted attractions. See also the Polanco section for lodgings on the park's north side.

CAMINO REAL MÉXICO

Map p78 Luxury Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5263-8888; www.caminoreal.com; Mariano Escobedo 700; r/ste US\$135/340; **M** Chapultepec; **P**

With over 700 rooms and covering 33,000 sq meters of grounds, the Camino Real is a truly monumental endeavor. It's also a national architectural landmark, boldly designed by Mexican Ricardo Legorreta, whose trademark geometric solids and great swathes of color lend it a refreshing simplicity. Murals by Rufino Tamayo and sculpture by Mathías Goeritz further boost the hotel's cachet. Among a set of internationally themed restaurants is a branch of New York's Le Cirque, possibly Mexico City's most exclusive place to dine.

HOTEL PARK VILLA Map p78 Motel \$\$\$

☎ 5515-5245; www.hotelparkvilla.com.mx; Gómez Pedraza 68, Colonia San Miguel Chapultepec; r M\$660, ste from M\$770; **M** Juanaacatlán; **P**

The only lodging on the south (Condesa) side of Bosque de Chapultepec, the auto-oriented Park Villa is in a self-contained compound. Terracotta tiles top a double deck of 40 rooms with 'rustic' furniture amid pink pastels and some leafy motifs hand-painted above the headboards. The larger suites are equipped with Jacuzzis and air-conditioning. Adjacent to the rooms through a bougainvillea-draped threshold is the Restaurante Jardín del Corregidor with seating on a pleasant patio, and a tiny zoo containing a couple of sleepy lions and tropical birds in heavily reinforced cages.

POLANCO

The Polanco neighborhood, just north of Bosque de Chapultepec and within walking distance of the Museo Nacional de Antropología, has some of the city's best hotels, mostly geared to international business travelers. Most prominent are the four sentinels of glass and stone standing opposite the Auditorio Nacional, known collectively as the Zona Hotelera. Staying in Polanco may not put you in touch with Mexico's indigenous identity but it will give you a taste of how modern Chilangos see themselves, somewhere between Euro-chic and New York funky.

W MEXICO CITY HOTEL

Map p84 Luxury Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 9138-1800; www.WHotels.com; Campos Elíseos 252; r/ste from US\$455/665; **M** Auditorio; **P**

One of the four sentinels opposite the Auditorio Nacional, Latin America's first W

is a 25-floor business hotel that's determined to break away from the stodginess of its neighbors. Rooms skillfully blend style, comfort and killer views, and feature goose-down quilts, high-tech entertainment and waterfall or massage showers (at the balcony end, which may appeal to exhibitionists). A spa takes up the entire 3rd floor, and includes a 'relaxation pool' and *temascal* (pre-Hispanic sauna). There's fine dining at Solea restaurant, which specializes in seafood à la mexicana, and serious imbibing at the Whiskey Bar.

HOTEL NIKKO MÉXICO

Map p84 Luxury Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5283-8787; www.hotelnikkomexico.com; Campos Elíseos 204; r incl breakfast from US\$350; **M** Auditorio; **P**

The Nikko blends modern luxury with Japanese traditions of service in an architecturally striking 38-story tower. The 744-room hotel features four restaurants (two of which specialize in Japanese fare) plus two bars, three tennis courts, a domed and heated swimming pool, a gym, a modern business center and a branch of the prestigious Alberto Misrahi art gallery. You'll pay about half the standard rate by booking online.

CASA VIEJA Map p84 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5512-0832; www.casavieja.com; Eugenio Sue 45; ste incl breakfast from US\$350; **M** Auditorio; **P**

Every whim is catered to at this aggressively colonial boutique hotel near Parque Lincoln. Aficionados of Mexican *artesanías* (handicrafts) will be thrilled by the 10 fancifully decorated suites, each inspired by a different artist. Worth the splurge? If you've ever wanted to step into a scene from the film *Frida*, it may very well be.

HÁBITA HOTEL Map p84 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5282-3100; www.hotelhabita.com; Presidente Masaryk 201; s/d US\$228/310; **M** Polanco; **P**

Mexican architect Enrique Norten turned a functional apartment building into one of the city's top boutique hotels. Decor in the 36 rooms is boldly minimal, with bone white walls, goose-down quilts on futons, and Japanese-style benches in the bathroom. The sleek rooftop bar, Área, is one of Polanco's hottest nightspots (see p168).

Downstairs, a restaurant called Aura serves sophisticated global cuisine, fusing Mexican ingredients with Asian and Italian favorites.

HOTEL POLANCO Map p84 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5280-8082; www.hotelpolanco.com; Edgar Allan Poe 8; s/d M\$1395/1455; **M** Auditorio; **X** **X** **Q** Unlike the nearby high-rises, this resembles a small European guesthouse of the sort Basil Fawlty might run, complete with Italian bistro and snippy desk manager. It's in a quiet, leafy section of the neighborhood, near the French embassy, with easy access to the National Auditorium through a little patch of forest. The hotel's 71 rooms eschew hipness for a sober ambience.

CONDESA

Thanks to the recent appearance of several attractive new lodgings, this trendy neighborhood south of Bosque de Chapultepec can be an excellent base, with plenty of after-hours restaurants and cafés amid tranquil tree-lined streets.

HIPPODROME HOTEL

Map p88 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5512-2110; www.thehippodromehotel.com; Mexico 188; r from US\$230; **M** Chilpancingo; **P** **Q**

Condesa's hottest new option is just north of the wonderful Parque México. American owner Tom Shortt converted the Edificio Tehuacán, one of the neighborhood's many art deco gems, into a sleek boutique hotel with the help of Contemporary Mexican designer Nahim Dagdug, who restored the interior to a contemporary Mexican aesthetic, using hardwoods and earthy hues. Original modern art complements the stylish furniture, all designed in-house. Getting out of bed, you step onto a luxuriously cushy shag rug that's laid into the marble floor. With just 16 rooms, it's a small, businesslike affair and features a similarly subdued restaurant, the Hip Kitchen (p148), with menus designed by guest chefs.

CONDESA DF Map p88 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5241-2600; www.condesadf.com; Veracruz 102; r from US\$182; **M** Chapultepec; **X** **Q** **Q** Setting the standard for Condesa hipness since its opening in 2005, this is where Paris Hilton and U2 checked in during recent DF visits. The 1920s structure has been quirkily

made over and furnished with an array of specially crafted objects. The rooms encircle an atrium-bar that's become one of Condesa's trendiest nightspots (partitions along the corridors are meant to reduce noise from below but don't count on it), with a fabulous rooftop component overlooking lush Parque España. Room decor is boldly minimal, with marshmallow beds backed by maplewood screens and original arched windows.

RED TREE HOUSE Map p88 B&B \$\$\$

☎ 5584-3829; www.theredtreehouse.com; Culiacán 6; s with private/shared bathroom US\$70/50, plus per additional person US\$15, penthouse US\$150; **M** Chilpancingo; **Q**

Just off the delightful Plaza Citlaltépetl, the neighborhood's first B&B is in a typically idiosyncratic Condesa residence. It has all the comforts of home (if your home happens to be brimming with art and is decorated with exquisite taste). Each of the three bedrooms on the middle level is uniquely furnished; up a spiral staircase is the top-floor apartment with its own terrace. Downstairs, guests have the run of a cozy living room with fireplace, the kitchen and the lovely rear garden, the domain of friendly pooch Abril. Such has been RTH's success that additional accommodations have been built at the rear of the garden.

HOTEL ROOSEVELT Map p88 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5208-6813; www.hotelroosevelt.com.mx; Insurgentes Sur 287; s/d M\$450/630; **Q** Metrobus Álvaro Obregón; **P** **Q**

On the eastern edge of Condesa and within easy reach of the Cuban club district across Av Insurgentes, this friendly if functional hotel should appeal to nocturnally inclined travelers. The large gray building has 74 well-illuminated units, most overlooking either busy Av Yucatán or busier Av Insurgentes Sur – fortunately, they're equipped with well-sealed windows.

ROMA

Close to the center but just enough outside it to possess a distinctly neighborhood character, Colonia Roma makes a convenient and interesting place to stay, with plenty of cafés, bookstores and galleries to browse. Most of the accommodations are along the main thoroughfare, Álvaro Obregón (though a few of

these are shady *de paso* places for short-term trysting guests).

LA CASONA Map pp92-3 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 5286-3001; www.hotellacasona.com.mx; Durango 280; r incl breakfast US\$217; **M** Sevilla; **X** This stately mansion was restored to its early-20th-century splendor to become one of the capital's most distinctive boutique hotels. Each of the 29 rooms has been lovingly restored and uniquely appointed to bring out its original charm. Though they vary in size, color scheme and layout, common elements include hardwood floors, fine antique furniture and fixtures, and warm colors highlighted by original moldings. The overall effect is wonderfully cozy though not too cutesy. The appropriately French restaurant on the premises spills into a lovely patio.

QUALITY INN Map pp92-3 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 1085-9500; www.choicehotelsmexico.com; Álvaro Obregón 38; r M\$1222; **M** Cuauhtémoc; **P** **X** **Q**

Facing Álvaro Obregón's leafy median, Colonia Roma's newest hotel resembles its pricier downtown counterparts. Equipped with iPod hookups and softly illuminated desk nooks, its 91 ultracomfortable units surround a skylight-capped central atrium. Book online for substantial discounts.

STANZA HOTEL Map pp92-3 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5208-0052; www.stanzahotel.com; Álvaro Obregón 13; r with/without air-con from M\$702/564; **M** Cuauhtémoc; **P** **X** **Q**

A business travelers' block on the east end of Álvaro Obregón by Jardín Pushkin, the Stanza makes a cushy, relatively inexpensive landing pad or re-entry chamber. The recently renovated hotel offers two categories of accommodation: executive (dark-stained furniture, large table-sized desks, air-con) and standard (cheaper furniture and slightly smaller bathrooms). Skip the bland coffee shop and make for any of Roma's numerous java joints instead.

HOTEL MILÁN Map pp92-3 Hotel \$\$

☎ 5584-0222; www.hotelmilan.com.mx; Álvaro Obregón 94; s/d M\$390/500; **M** Insurgentes; **P** **Q**

Though lacking in character, the Milán is comfortable and stands in the heart of

bohemian Colonia Roma. Design and decor are utterly typical of Mexican business accommodations (small box of a shower, artificial flowers, reproductions of Parisian street scenes), but the hotel makes great efforts to keep things spiffy and its level of service and quality of facilities match others at twice the price. The lobby level boasts a well-stocked bar and a restaurant which some claim offers decent fare, though it's not hard to find better options nearby.

CASA DE LA CONDESA

Map pp92-3 Serviced Apartment \$\$\$

☎ 5574-3186; www.extendedstaymexico.com; Plaza Luis Cabrera 16; ste from M\$643; **M** Insurgentes

Right on the delightful Plaza Luis Cabrera, the Casa de la Condesa makes a tranquil base for visitors on an extended stay, offering 'suites' that are essentially studio apartments with kitchens. With awesome tableaux of the plaza's grand fountains, the front suites far outclass the interior 'junior suites' or the diminutive standard rooms. All are decorated *rústico* style, with the usual swabbed-on bright oranges and deep blues and the odd knickknack from Metepec or Puebla. Mexican-style breakfasts are served in the little ground-floor *comedor* (dining room).

HOTEL EMBASSY Map pp92-3 Hotel \$

☎ 5208-0859; fax 5511-0344; Puebla 115; s/d/tr M\$290/340/380; **M** Insurgentes; **P**

Despite a charmless location, this well-maintained modern lodging is conveniently placed a couple of blocks from the metro, and right next door to the excellent Cantina Covadonga (p164). The abundance of mirrored surfaces suggests this hotel appeals to trysting guests, but it's well looked after and the price is right.

HOSTEL HOME Map pp92-3 Hostel \$

☎ 5511-1683; www.hostelhome.com.mx; Tabasco 303; dm M\$120; **Q** Metrobus Álvaro Obregón; **Q**

Housed in a fine Porfiriano-era building, the small (20-bed) Hostel Home is situated on narrow tree-lined Calle Tabasco, which makes a tranquil gateway to the Roma neighborhood. Managed by youthful and easygoing staff, this hostel is a good place to meet other travelers and find out what's going on.

AIRPORT ACCOMMODATION

Aside from the two upscale hotels accessible from the terminal, these more-economical lodgings are just across the street. Exit the domestic terminal and turn left; past the metro entrance, take a left onto Blvd Puerto Aéreo and cross via the pedestrian bridge.

Fiesta Inn (Map pp42–3; ☎ 5133-6600; www.fiestainn.com; Blvd Puerto Aéreo 502; r M\$1538; **M** Terminal Aérea; **P** **X** **♿** **♿** **♿** **♿** **♿** **♿**) Securely enclosed in a compound dotted with tropical greenery, this branch of the business-class chain offers rooms with balconies around the pool. Transport to/from your flight is included, and rates are about 20% cheaper on weekends.

Ramada Aeropuerto México (Map pp42–3; ☎ 5133-3232; www.ramadamexico.com; Blvd Puerto Aéreo 390; r incl breakfast M\$1638; **P** **♿** **♿** **♿**) More stylish than its neighbors, the Ramada offers modern comfort for execs between flights, and it offers shuttles to and from the terminal. For entertainment you can hang in the piano bar.

Hotel Aeropuerto (Map pp42–3; ☎ 5785-5851; fax 5784-1329; Blvd Puerto Aéreo 380; s/d M\$500/600; **M** Terminal Aérea; **P**) Not as bleakly functional as the aluminum facade portends (or the name suggests), the only nonchain hotel in the zone has helpful reception staff inside a glass booth and neutral modern rooms, some overlooking the airport runway through soundproof windows.

OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS COYOACÁN

Despite Coyoacán's appeal, the southern community has only one central place to stay, listed below. At the time of research, plans were afoot to open a new HI hostel in the neighborhood; check with the Centro Histórico branch (p200) to see if it's open yet. Otherwise, you might inquire about short-term home stays at the tourist office in the Casa de Cortés (see p260).

HOSTAL FRIDA Map p95 Hostel \$\$
☎ 5659-7005; www.hostalfridabyb.com.mx;
Mina 54; d M\$500; **M** Viveros

Run by an English-speaking couple whose kids have moved on, this 'empty nest' is being refilled with international travelers. Each of the five scrupulously maintained wood-floored doubles occupies its own level in two adjacent towers, and all but

one include kitchens. The excellent location is four blocks west of Frida Kahlo's place and just around the corner from a branch of the Café El Jarocho.

CIUDAD UNIVERSITARIA

Staying nearby the sprawling campus of UNAM would afford an excellent opportunity to get to know student life while giving easy access to the southern districts of San Ángel and Tlalpan.

EL CENOTE AZUL Map p105 Hostel \$
☎ 5554-8730; www.elcenoteazul.com;
Alfonso Pruneda 24; dm M\$100; **M** Copilco

This small, laid-back hostel near the campus of the national university has space for 20 occupants in neatly kept four- or two-bed rooms sharing two Talavera-tiled bathrooms. Guests and UNAM students mingle downstairs around the patio, lounging on beds that hang from an overhead loft, sitting in front of a big TV, or snacking at the café, which prepares hearty natural fare.

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