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PASSPORT

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Here's a look at 10 Pride events from around the world that will be happening this summer. For our complete International Pride Guide visit passportmagazine.com.

STARTING A NEW LIFE IN FRANCE

When love comes your way, prepare for the unexpected. For Anthony Uzarowski, this meant starting a new life and moving to France.

GLOBETROTTING: ANTWERP, BELGIUM

Antwerp is the second largest city after Brussels, but it's number one when it comes to being flush with a rich culture, fashion, design, and culinary experiences.

DISCOVER GUADALAJARA, MEXICO

The new and old coexist in Guadalajara, a beautiful, complex city with modest charms and fiery fun.

ART OF TRAVEL: NEON LAS VEGAS

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OUT WEST ROAD TRIP

Our Wild West road trip takes you through six states and includes visits to several national parks, three big cities, and a plethora of small towns and roadside attractions.

BUSINESS CLASS

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Discovering GUADALAJARA, MEXICO by Kelsy Chauvin

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y introduction to Guadalajara began with a surprise snapshot of Mexican heritage. It was hot already for midmorning, and I found myself at the *Historico Centro*, home to the city's main cluster of attractions. I had arrived early for a walking tour, so I wandered into the **Palacio de Gobierno** (Government Palace).

The building's courtyard offered shade and serenity. But just as I found that peace, I turned to find fire and fury in one of Mexico's most dramatic murals, *The People and Its Leaders*, by the great José Clemente Orozco. The enormous fresco depicts legendary Mexican independence leader Miguel Hidalgo, torch in hand, lighting the way to liberty. Orozco's vision tells a story of national pride, emblazoned on public walls like a reminder of Mexicans' revolutionary conviction.

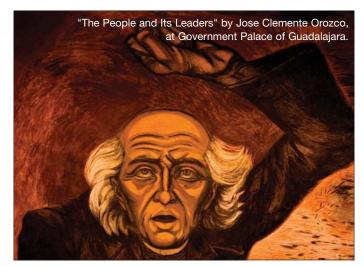
The vision left me awestruck as I returned outside to the **Plaza de Armas**. In contrast to the fiery drama of the governmental mural, the town square was feeling festive for the start of *Dia de Muertos*, or Day of the Dead. All around the plaza stood *Las Catrinas*, the holiday's most familiar symbols, each one a skeletal figure, usually female, and finely dressed and decorated with flowers and bright colors. On this day, largerthan-life *catrinas* surrounded the plaza as tourists and locals snapped photos. Elaborate sidewalk altars to beloved ancestors were arranged with marigolds and candles, and musicians sang and strummed guitars.

This was a perfect introduction to vibrant Guadalajara, Mexico's second-largest city. It's the land of traditions like *mariachi*, *jarabe tapatío*, and *charrería*—that is, respectively, Mexican folk music, the region's famous courtship dance, and Mexican rodeo.

But Guadalajara embraces the modern world, too. It's a high-tech city that's been called "Mexico's Silicon Valley," has a tantalizing culinary scene, and is seeing innovative modern architecture rise citywide.

Better still, Guadalajara is a welcoming destination for LGBTQ travelers. The city works with the **International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association** (iglta.org/Country/Mexico), and it's also home to the tremendous **Guadalajara Pride** (guadalajarapride.com) event in June that marches a long route through the city center to **Plaza de la Liberación**. Pride began here in 1979, making it the oldest in the country, and earning the city comparisons to San Francisco.

In 2019, Guadalajara also hosted the **Federation of Gay Games** (www.gaygames.org) annual general-assembly meeting. Though the city lost the 2022 Gay Games to Hong Kong, it earned much-deserved attention from global LGBTQ decision-makers, and rightfully claimed its spot as a proud, gay-friendly destination.



Tona Centro, the area just west of Plaza de Armas, is where I found the main cluster of gay bars and clubs, like big busy California's Bar (Av 8 de Julio 652. Tel: 52-33-1197-5016. facebook.com/pages/Californias-Bar/189637117746524) for dancing, and Cabaret VIP (Calle Galeana 277. Tel: 52-33-1342-2386. facebook.com/cabaretvip) for drag shows and karaoke.

There are several more discos downtown and beyond, in hip neighborhoods like Chapultepec. After 6 P.M., there is one essential stop for any LGBTQ traveler: **Tacos Gay** (Calle Prisciliano Sánchez 391-A. Tel: 52-33-1170-9079), a food stand serving the gay village with late-night *tacos al pastor* and other spicy late-night snacks.

As much as I love tacos, Guadalajara serves up another famous dish that I soon found irresistible. *Torta ahogado* is a "drowned sandwich" typically made of chopped pork on thick, crusty bread, then it's covered with a ladle full of chili-based red sauce. (Chicken, beans, and cheese also make tasty fillings.) The bread soaks up the savory sauce, and even though these sandwiches are crazy messy, most *tapatios* (as Guadalajaran residents are known) still manage to eat them with their hands. I was lucky to find one of the best casual eateries for tortas ahogado near my hotel in Chapalita at **Tortas Toño** (tortastono.com.mx), a beloved local chain.

At **Hotel 1970 Posada** (Av. Adolfo López Mateos Sur 1280. Tel: 52-33-3121-2424. www.hilton.com), I got to try more delicious dishes and memorable cocktails at **JAL by Hueso**. **Hueso** (Calle Efraín González Luna 2061. Tel: 52-33-3615-7915. huesorestaurant.com) is one of the city's top restaurants, led by renowned Chef Poncho Cadena. He partnered with Chef Gil Covarrubias to form JAL in the emerging Chapalita neighborhood, about a 15-minute cab ride southwest of Zona Centro. The menu centers on traditional Mexican and international dishes made with local ingredients, including its standout pork stew, which tastes even better alongside a black margarita, made with earthy charcoal liqueur.

JAL restaurant occupies the ground level of Hotel 1970 Posada's beautiful seven-story central atrium, which is capped by a skylight and surrounded by the hotel's 162 guestrooms. Each one is chic and decorated with wood features and textiles handmade locally. The rooftop's **Se7enta** is an indoor-outdoor sky bar with small bites, a firepit, and city views.

s the capital of the state of Jalisco, Guadalajara is rich with culture that dates back centuries. In the 1530s, Spanish explorers moved into the area, then situated between several pre-Hispanic settlements. The Spanish colonists established the city's basic infrastructure, erected the Guadalajara Cathedral (which has been rebuilt a few times), and started industries that flourished thanks to rail lines linked to the United States. In Mexico, only Mexico City rivals Guadalajara's strong economy, and its success shows across the metropolis with plenty of arts and culture.

In the Centro, I got to discover some of the city's marvels with the help of Liliana Barragan of **Dragonfly Tours** (dragonfly.pro). She explained more about Guadalajara's layered heritage, beginning with the **Regional Museum of Guadalajara** (Calle Liceo 60. Tel: 52-33-3613-2703. inah.gob.mx/red-de-museos/204-museo-regional-de-guadalajara), a 1701 colonial structure that's been Jalisco's natural history, art, and artifact reliquary for more than a century.

Next she invited our small group to peek into the 19th century, neoclassical **Teatro Degollado** (Av. Hidalgo y Morelos. sc.jalisco.gob.mx/patrimonio/teatros-y-foros/teatro-degollado), where the high notes of classical opera and philharmonic seemed to cling to the velvet seats. Outside on **Plaza de**



I sipped a mezcal concoction from a hand-painted bowl and listened to a mariachi trio, absorbing nouveau spins on traditional Jaliscan food and culture. I felt the new and old coexisting in Guadalajara, a beautiful, complex city with modest charms and fiery fun.

la Liberación, she explained more about Mexican revolutionary Miguel Hidalgo, who stands proudly in bronze, poised to fight. His zealous depiction contrasts the lighter vibes of the giant pink-and-white "Guadalajara" Guadalajara" signs, meant to evoke the classic mariachi song recorded by dozens of singers, including Elvis Presley in 1963.

We strolled down **Paseo Hospicio** (aka Plaza Tapatía), a pedestrian shopping promenade that's heavy on knockoffs, and dotted with historical markers, fountains, and other sights that only a savvy tour guide knows to point out.

In Liliana's capable hands, we soon arrived at **Museo Cabañas** (Calle Cabañas 8. Tel: 52-33-3668-1642. museocabanas.jalisco.gob.mx), perhaps the most famous and striking museum in town. The former 18thcentury orphanage is today a large art museum and events space, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site thanks to its magnificent, dramatic Orozco ceiling and wall murals. I could have spent hours staring up at them, following the artist's detailed visions of colonists vs. native people, paralleled by symbolic images of industry vs. nature. The sprawling murals are all the more fascinating knowing that Orozco lost his left hand and damaged his left eye in a fireworks accident at age 21, and still went on to create such masterworks.

Departing this iconic museum, we crossed Calle Dionisio Rodriguez

to visit Latin America's largest indoor market, the **Mercado Libertad** -**San Juan de Dios**, housing five stories and some 3,000 stalls. It can be overwhelming at first, and the wares are endless. Head here for cowboy gear, silver jewelry, leather ware, household goods, fresh produce, toys, souvenirs, dried edible crickets, and even voodoo supplies. Just don't miss the third-floor food stands, which drew me in for succulent tacos (fish and meat), ceviche, fresh juices, *jericalla* (Jaliscan flan), and *birria* (spicy goat or mutton stew).

By comparison, local gastronomy also comes as a memorable sit-down tasting experience at **Xokol Antojeria** (Calle Ignacio Herrera y Cairo 1392. Tel: 52-33-1229-9085), in Santa Teresita. The menu here changes weekly, but one thing that's consistent are its corn-based dishes and drinks, which channel its co-chefs' ancestral heritage. The food is incredible, but the restaurant is tiny, so reserve well in advance to try Xokol's inventive cuisine.

rom art, shopping, and dining on Saturday, it was time to enjoy some horsing around on Sunday morning at **Campo Charro Jalisco** (Av. Dr. Roberto Michel 577. Tel: 52-33-3619-0315) in San Carlos. The Mexican rodeo known as "charrería" is not just the country's national sport, it's a UNESCO-designated cultural event that began with

La Catrina in Cemetery

Photo:



16th-century herdsmen culture. As they do nearly every Sunday at noon, *charros* (cowboys) from around the state head to this small stadium near **Parque Agua Azul** to show off their horse-riding skills and tricks. For me, the highlight was *escaramuza charra*, the female stunt-riding team of about a dozen side-saddled women who perform synchronized routines.

Afterwards, I headed to Avenida Chapultepec in the neighborhood called America to stroll its shady promenade, reminiscent of Barcelona's La Rambla for its broad array of cafés, boutiques, and public art. Then it was time for an early dinner at trendy **Anita Li** (Av Inglaterra 3100. Tel: 52-33-3647-4757. anitali.mx) one of my new favorite restaurants, which is in located in the Vallarta neighborhood. Clad in vivid tones of teal, Anita Li is an airy, urban restaurant that seems to channel beach shacks; flavors of Thailand and Vietnam; and Mexican gastronomic traditions. It's a sweet spot for lunch or dinner, or to sip cocktails that may mix in anything from pisco, Aperol, and cassis to ancho chiles, aromatic herbs, and fresh fruit. BTW, Anita Li spelled backwards is **I Latina**, which happens to be the name of its equally charming sister restaurant down the block (Av Inglaterra 3128. Tel: 52-33-3647-7774).

My final day began with a strong Mexican hot chocolate and *chi-laquiles verdes* at **Café P'al Real** (Calle Lope de Vega 113. Tel: 52-33-1983-7254) in Arcos Vallarta, whose open-air dining room is inviting for any meal of the day.

Then I ventured into the historic old town known as **Tlaquepaque**, where narrow lanes are lined with technicolor buildings divvied up by quaint plazas. Though you'll find Insta-worthy sights around every corner on an average day, come Dia de Muertos week, be ready for catrinas overload. I couldn't believe the mastery of face painting and elaborate costumes here, like Mexican Mardi Gras with even more colors and sequins.

As night began to fall, I met friends at Casa Luna (Calle Independen-

cia 211. Tel: 52-33-1592-2061. facebook.com/CasaLunaRest) for a menu of "Mexican haute cuisine" and refined libations. I sipped a mezcal concoction from a hand-painted bowl and listened to a mariachi trio, absorbing nouveau spins on traditional Jaliscan food and culture. I felt the new and old coexisting in Guadalajara, a beautiful, complex city with modest charms and fiery fun.

