



Guanajuato
Live Great Stories
Secretary of Tourism

Surrounding Trails



Surrounding Trails

An Insight to Guanajuato's Road-tripping

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Secretary of Tourism of Guanajuato
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Guanajuato
Live Great Stories
Secretaría de Turismo

A journey through Guanajuato

The timing and schedule in the making of this book have served us to find, investigate, inquire, visit, acknowledge, and revisit the vast spaces of this State. Each site has something to offer to its visitors, each place grants an experience, a memory that will last and serve for one to share with others to restart this cycle.

Just a few of the words contained in these pages, a few of these "thousand words images", could be possible without the kindness of each of the persons that we have found in the way: salers, guardians, farmers, children, elders, all of them have shared in some way their vision to this mountains, to this hills, the still waters of the dams, the paths, and serpent roads, the roots, the streaks, the birds, the insects and reptiles, the fruits of the earth.

The magnificence of each one of this spots and experiences contained in these pages means less than nothing without the smile, warmth, and company of the people from Guanajuato.









Diego Sinhue Rodríguez Vallejo

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GUANAJUATO

In Guanajuato, environmental conservation is a fundamental priority of our government, not only because we are a state privileged by its enormous natural wealth.

In addition to our strategic location, we have a generous land in terms of natural resources and scenery; in the variety of its flora and fauna; in its mountains and valleys.

Our Natural Protected Areas occupy a little more than 20 percent of our territory and 98 percent of our biodiversity is found there.

Undoubtedly, a great natural heritage that we must care for and preserve.

And the first step to care for and protect this valuable heritage is to discover it, hence the importance of this book "Surrounding Trails" that invites us to travel through the landscape of the greatness of our state.

I hope that this book will become a faithful traveling companion and advisor, inspiring each reader to explore the treasures that nature has generously given to this land.

Our appreciation to all the people who have participated in its edition, thank you for sharing your admiration and amazement at the immeasurable beauty of our land.



Juan José Álvarez Brunel

SECRETARY OF TOURISM OF GUANAJUATO

“Surrounding Trails” is a detailed journey through the natural treasures in the greatness of Guanajuato.

We at the Tourism Secretary's Office hope that its reading will be a wonderful experience.

In addition, we are sure that the book will become an excellent guide that will orient the steps of our visitors and tourists with practical itineraries and precise travel tips.

In Guanajuato we know that tourism is not simply a means to discover territories, but a crucial tool to promote social development and prosperity of our people.

So welcome to a tour that not only seeks to expose the greatness and abundant beauty of Guanajuato, but also to sow the seeds of a vibrant and sustainable tourism future, where great stories are lived every day.

The commitment of our Tourism Secretary is to continue promoting sustainable development.

Because without healthy natural ecosystems there is no tourism, and without tourism there is no generation of opportunities for economic growth and social development.

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Surrounding Trails

An Insight to Guanajuato's Road-tripping

INTRODUCTION



Fig. 1
Aerial view of Cañada de Ortega



SURROUNDING TRAILS

Fig. 2
Tree-lined in the community of El Juguete.





Relatively close to the most touristic points of our state, there are some destinations that contrast with the urban environment, places that make the bucolic its charm, with a mystical presence, clean air and hills and mountains from where the view invites you to soak up the scenery.

In this way: contrast between the admirable black-tailed rattlesnake and the cervel charm of the white-tailed deer, endemic species of Guanajuato, clearly reflects the vast biodiversity and, therefore, the variety of ecosystems that coexist in this central Mexican state.

This book intends the complex but not impossible task of taking our reader to these places, to sniff pleasantly through its pages, pictures that delicately capture the spirit of each locations, their people

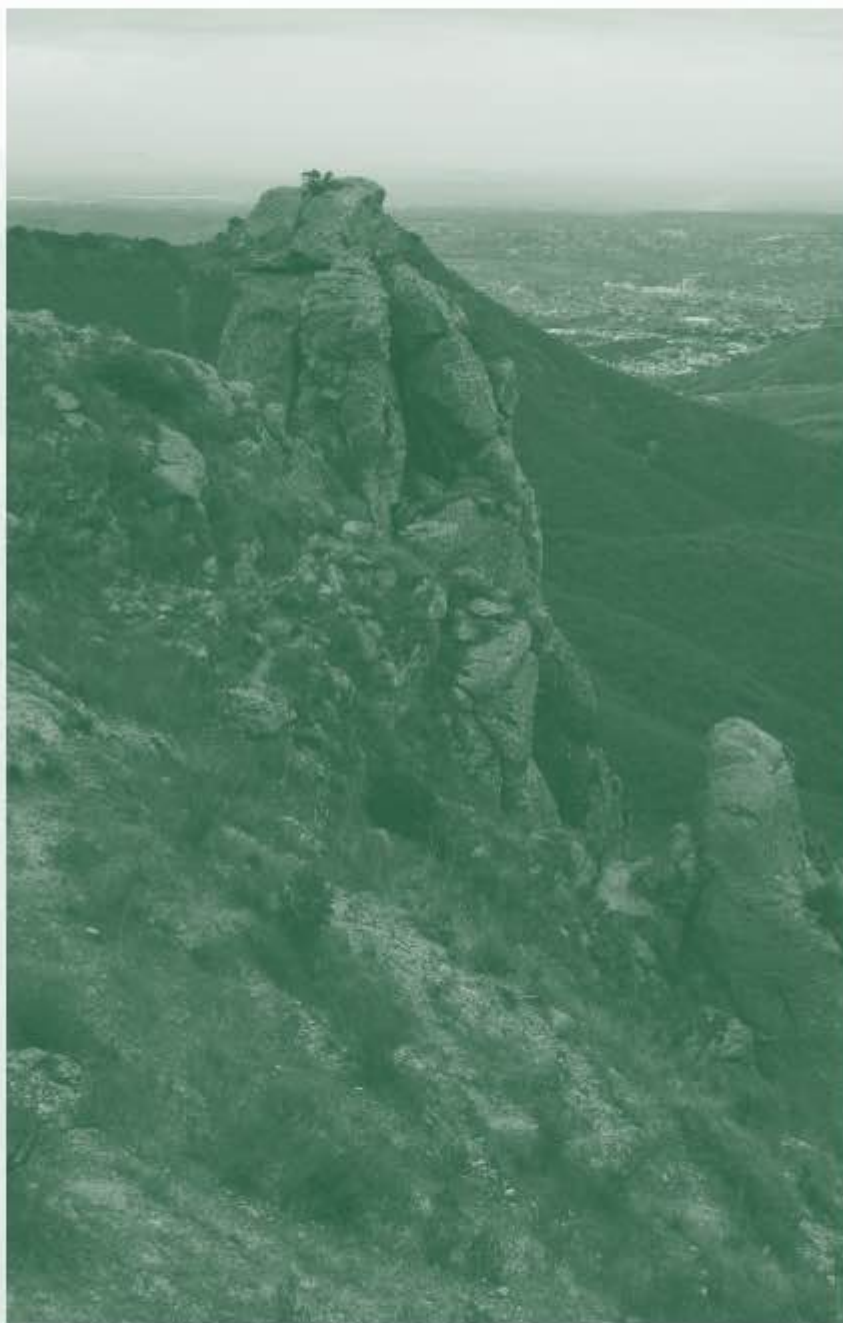



Fig. 3
Cerro de la Bufa, Guanajuato City.



and the trails that lead to them; An editorial structure that takes you visually, by the hand like a local guide that would even invite us to venture through canyons and cliffs from the comfort of wherever you are, at home, in your office, in a hotel or while having a cup of coffee; and finally, a storytelling designed to inspire and provide the potential roadtrip that is at your fingertips right now.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry famously wrote that those who want to travel happily should travel light. That is why, in the first chapter, *Detouring off the route*, we tempt the reader with a map of the natural treasures and the nearest cities so that whoever decides to follow these routes can easily take the appropriate precautions to comfortably follow their adventure trail of discovery.

In *Trails and paths* we open the menu to a greener reality that is nevertheless “a stone’s throw” from any Guanajuato highway: short getaways to locations that are not part of the asphalt landscape and where the trees begin a reign of serenity without straying too far from civilization.

Once we reach *Waterbodies* we will be in a territory where fun and peace of mind find a variety of options to bloom, since Guanajuato has sites for canoeing, sailing and water parks,

as well as hot springs and paradisiacal spots with circulating water to refresh the soul in the north and south of its territory; the state water bodies provide cultural identity to a certain number of municipalities, reflected in their cuisine and in their traditions and habits, in such a way that visiting these regions becomes an experience that goes beyond the scenery or canoeing, but becomes enveloping, especially at that time of night, when the water and the sky speak the same language of lights, a language of stars, which can – and we must be careful – be confused with the language of fireflies if we close our eyes in front of the bonfire.

The desert has a skin, wrote the poet José Cruz Camargo, and in the case of Guanajuato, the semi-desert zone has a skin full of cacti of all shapes and sizes, strange monoliths whose shape defies the imagination, hence



Fig. 4
Sabinos in Las Musas



the characteristic sinuosity of these northern land takes us to all those places described in their writings, what a contrast, by the Beat Generation poets and several pre-Hispanic poets that survived the Spanish conquest. Semi-desert lands is then a chapter presenting destinations that require considerable but achievable travel time to reach, and that shows to the eye the rough landscapes that the wild cat, the woodpecker, the sparrow hawk and the owl have made their home since immemorial days.

Finally, there are some places where only hawks set their eyes, remote destinations that require a bit of fatigue and hard work to reach, but it doesn't matter because the journey is life, just as the famous writer Jack Kerouac, a true lover of Mexico's landscape, once said. Thus, at the last chapter, Hills and mountain chains, we experience the reward of contemplating from high above, of dominating the horizon and feeling how the cleanest wind erases the sweat and fatigue, there where, after drinking from the water bottle, a well-delivered shout will echo from mountain to mountain, an acoustic mirror game that speaks of our greatness when it sounds and, when it fades away, of how ephemeral we can be.



Fig. 5
Rappel zone in Capulines, Celaya.





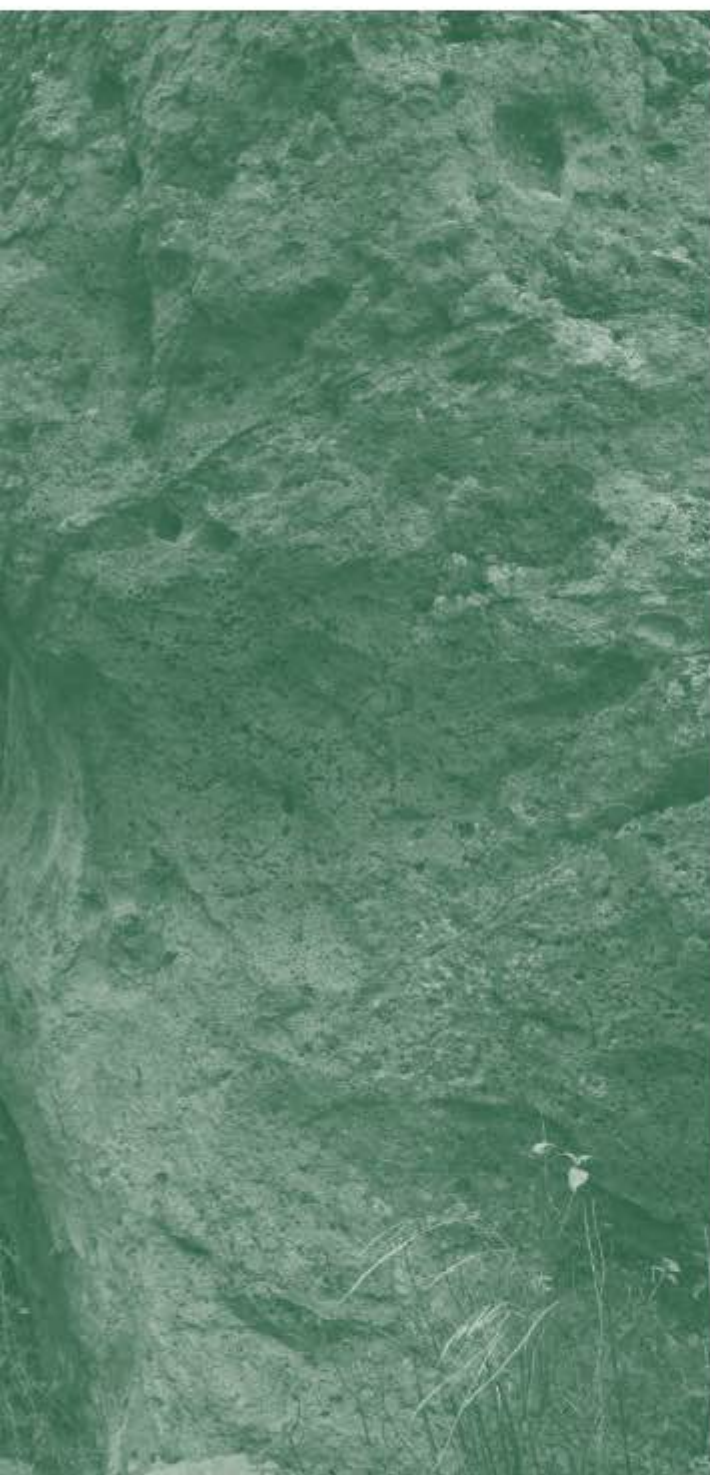


Fig. 6
Cerro de La Bufa trail.

Surrounding Trails is one of the most beautiful personal and family orientated invitations to get to know a different side of Guanajuato that does not always appear in the guide-books and that is here, in the hands of the readers, so that by finishing this book, they can close their eyes and all around them, suddenly will smell of pine, mountain, cypress and campfire.





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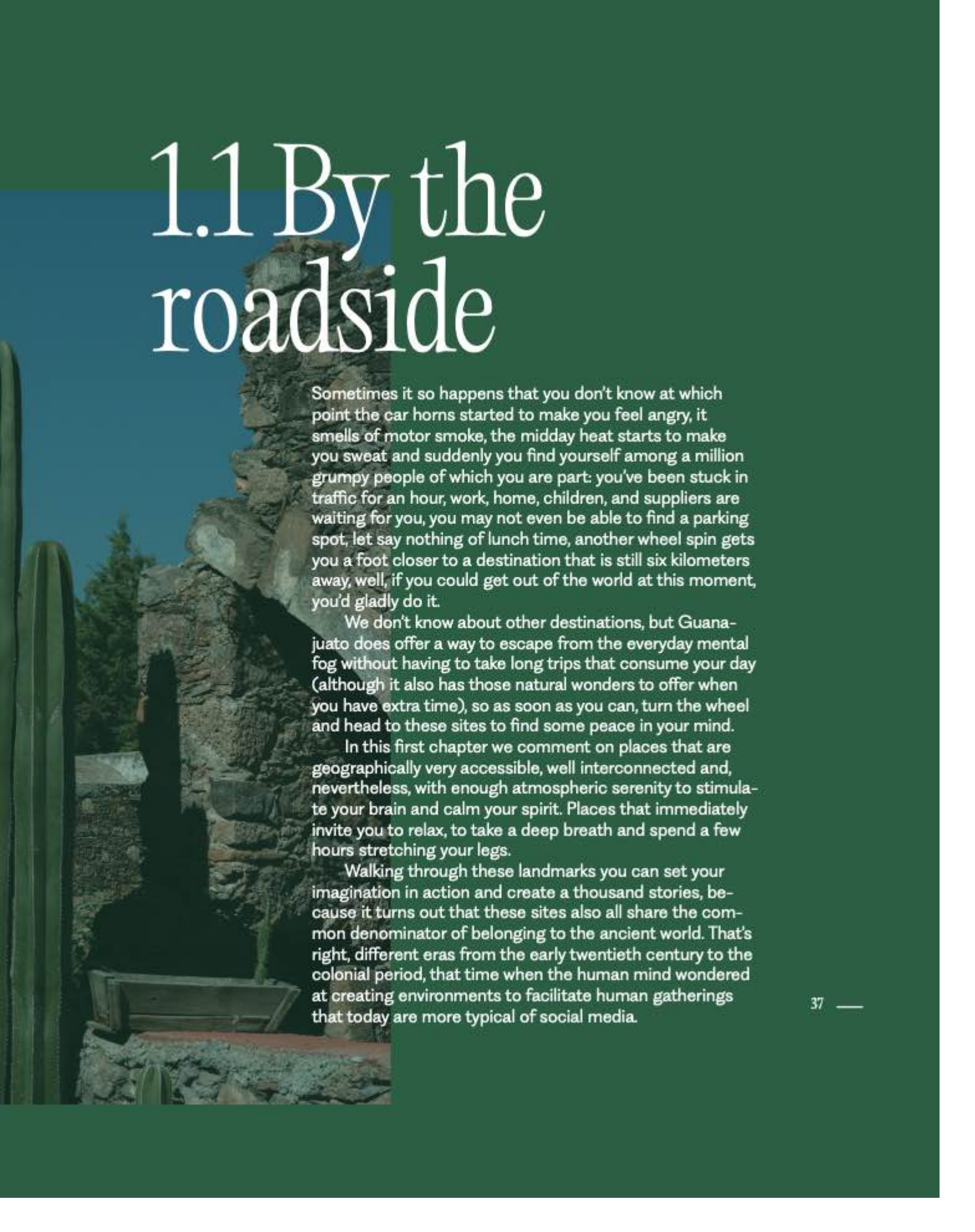
Surrounding Trails



1. Detouring off route





A photograph of a stone wall and a cactus against a blue sky. The wall is made of rough, stacked stones and has a dark, arched opening. To the left of the wall is a tall, green saguaro cactus. The background is a clear blue sky. The title '1.1 By the roadside' is overlaid on the top left of the image in a large, white, serif font.

1.1 By the roadside

Sometimes it so happens that you don't know at which point the car horns started to make you feel angry, it smells of motor smoke, the midday heat starts to make you sweat and suddenly you find yourself among a million grumpy people of which you are part: you've been stuck in traffic for an hour, work, home, children, and suppliers are waiting for you, you may not even be able to find a parking spot, let say nothing of lunch time, another wheel spin gets you a foot closer to a destination that is still six kilometers away, well, if you could get out of the world at this moment, you'd gladly do it.

We don't know about other destinations, but Guana-juato does offer a way to escape from the everyday mental fog without having to take long trips that consume your day (although it also has those natural wonders to offer when you have extra time), so as soon as you can, turn the wheel and head to these sites to find some peace in your mind.

In this first chapter we comment on places that are geographically very accessible, well interconnected and, nevertheless, with enough atmospheric serenity to stimulate your brain and calm your spirit. Places that immediately invite you to relax, to take a deep breath and spend a few hours stretching your legs.

Walking through these landmarks you can set your imagination in action and create a thousand stories, because it turns out that these sites also all share the common denominator of belonging to the ancient world. That's right, different eras from the early twentieth century to the colonial period, that time when the human mind wondered at creating environments to facilitate human gatherings that today are more typical of social media.



The Ex Hacienda Cañada de Ortega, along its ruins and remnants, reminds us of the peak of the 19th century agricultural industry. This historic hacienda reflects the architectural style of that era and the important contribution of the agave, corn and other agricultural products to the region's development.

The history of Guanajuato has also been driven by mining industry and the fascination for precious metals, but as is normal, these resources are finite and because of this, there are many places that were once splendid and nowadays are mere ruins. This is the case of Mineral de Pozos, whose uniqueness is the mysticism that surrounds it, which today has become a point of reference for all those interested in an alternative lifestyle or just for those who want to wander through a ghost town and take a few selfies.

And while speaking of another time, hardly anyone knows it! But when traveling from Celaya to Comonfort, it is common to drive by without noticing that there is a hidden place on the roadside, that is the village of Soria, a small settlement that flourished in a particular way during the last century. It happens that in the midst of the industrial revolution and the social changes of those times, many forms of coexistence between workers and their workplaces were experienced, so this village today holds an atmosphere trapped in that times, keeping one or another dark tale and several secrets that will surely attract you inexplicably when you first step on its white, almost ghostly streets.

«Take, child, this blossom of flowers;
It has lilies of gentle whiteness,
fragrant lilies and red cloves,
it has also camellias, amaranth
and roses without thistles.»

Antonio Plaza,
Poet from Apaseo El Grande

Soria, a village trapped in its past

VILLAGE OF SORIA



Comonfort, Guanajuato.



1790 m above sea level.



Hiking and walking



Sub-humid and sub-warm



138 km / 1:45 hrs
from León, Gto.



Nestled on a hillside at kilometer sixteen of the Celaya - San Miguel de Allende highway, there is a village that was born of utopia and that, to date, preserves something of it, in an ancient spirit that surrounds its streets, its houses, its trees and everything that this little place contains within its own.

Soria is a small village with only eight streets, framed by the Centennial Textile Factory of Soria, which embraces in its precedents figures of the Mexican War of Independence such as Lucas Alamán; it was the site of the assassination of the former Mexico's president, Ignacio Comonfort, and even hosted, as part of its intricate trails through the history of the Mexican Reform War, on an extraordinary occasion to the emperor Maximilian of Habsburg.



Fig. 7
Inside the Soria Textile Factory

Fig. 8
Soria Textile Factory



The village extends over a territory of a square mile, made up of small houses (mostly empty) originally built by the owners of the factory to provide housing for their workers, all of them white houses with shedron dust cover; with eight unique streets and sidewalks that are symbolic of reaching a certain sense of peace. Once you get to the main street, the sight is surrounded by a vast line of



If you want to visit the factory, book at least one week in advance.



huge trees, whose canopies during springtime cover the sun like a dome, reducing its temperature and producing a more than spooky feeling at nightfall.

At the gates of the textile factory, which can sometimes be open for the public, you will find the local church and a vintage water fountain, this spot undoubtedly provides the best photographs of the trip.



Arriving at its flattest area, a huge row of gigantic trees surrounds the sight, like giants that shape the barrier for a crowded parade that crosses a wide street through where our mortals' eyes only see silence and leaves.



Fig. 9
Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Church

Fig. 10
Fountain on the outskirts of the Soria Textile Factory

Fig. 11
Workers at the Soria Textile Factory



In Soria you will find a weekly artisan and holistic products tianguis and every day you will be able to buy cashmere of different colors and also women's and men's garments made with this fabric by the locals, so that cloth acquires, in the same place, an added value.

As a colophon, it is worth mentioning that every village with the impression of being connected to the afterlife has its own tales. In Soria, according to the locals and those in the know, "El Catrín" appears at midnight, a pale man dressed in the best mournful clothes of the Viceroyalty of New Spain period, such a pitiful ghost that few brave people have dared to record in some explorations to inaccessible areas of the factory.



COMONFORT TOURIST OFFICE

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- The first weekend of every month there is a handicraft market.

These ruins you see...

MINERAL DE POZOS



All ghost towns have been abandoned by their inhabitants, but few of them can claim, if it can be said, to have been abandoned twice, and this is the fascinating case of Mineral de Pozos, Guanajuato.



San Luis de la Paz,
Guanajuato.



2200 m above sea level.



Hiking



Temperate and semiarid



170 km / 3:00 hrs
from León, Gto.

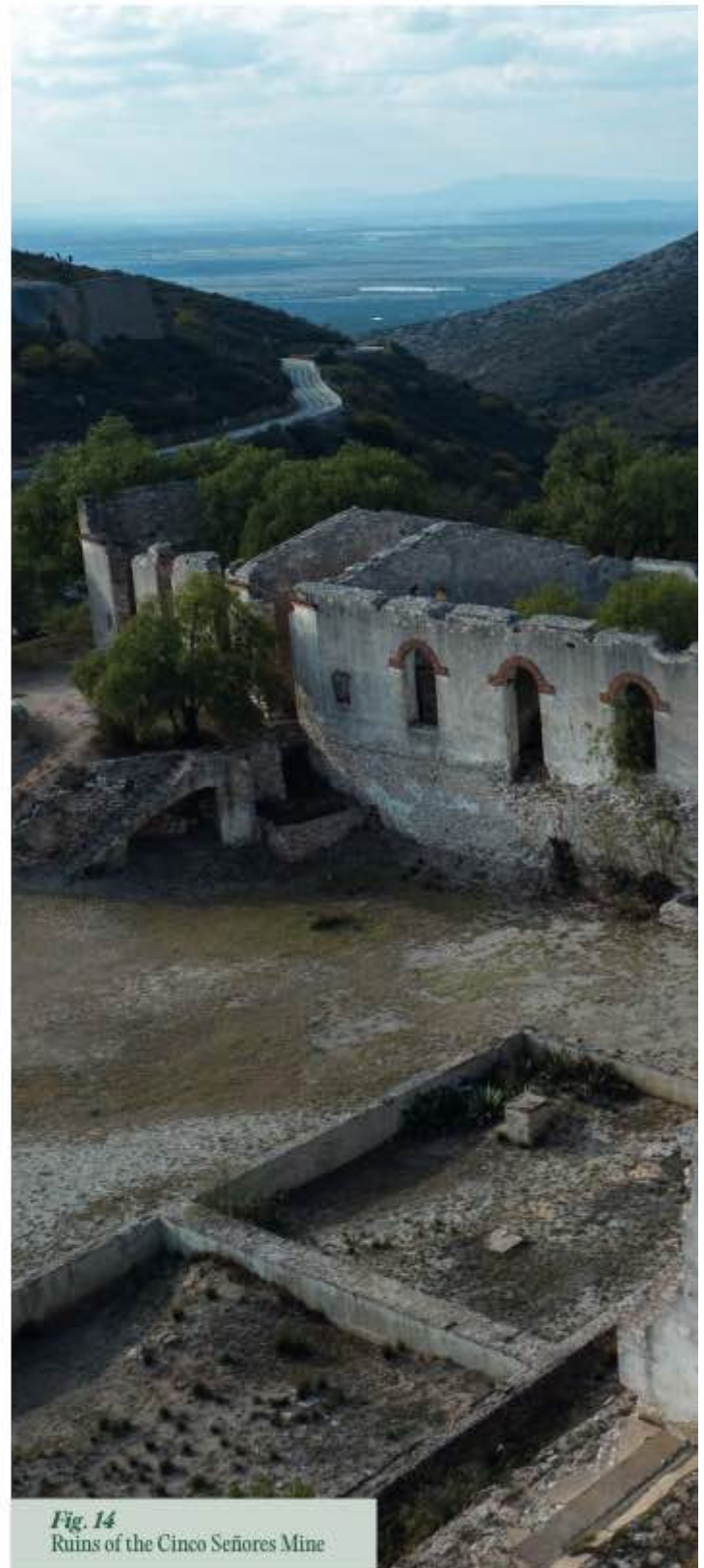


Fig. 14
Ruins of the Cinco Señores Mine





Fig. 15

A building close to the old location of a stove in the Cinco Señores mine. view from the second patio.

Fig. 16

Lined doors of the rooms of the former Main House of Cinco Señores Mine



Located just a few minutes away from traveling through the northern part of Guanajuato, Mineral de Pozos has a pre-Hispanic heritage since it was occupied by Chichimecas, Guachichiles and Pames; during the Viceroyalty period it became an agricultural settlement, the inhabitants of that time were first displaced without knowing that they lived over vast silver and gold deposits, then the land was resettled and went on to a brief mining boom that culminated with its abandonment in the third decade of the 20th century.

Mineral de Pozos awakens in its visitors that melancholic attraction for the ruinous, and invites them to imagine through the remains of floors and murals the past splendor of its mansions and mines.



Fig. 17
Jesuit furnaces of the Ex Hacienda de Sta Brigida in Mineral de Pozos.





Mineral de Pozos was able to make out of that ancient wealth large mansions and build a ruinous countryside, which has been the scene of numerous movies, thanks to its fields of aromatic flowers and the contrasting semi-desert that surrounds it.

The result of all this is that from a couple of decades to date this place has become a meeting point for bohemians, a venue for alternative cultures and a perfect space for the wellness lifestyle.

Nowadays you can access guided tours through its abandoned mines, as well as the most varied types of spas, beers and mezcal tastings, local food such as "colonche", escamoles and maguery worms during the season.

This touristic destination has many activities to offer all year round, such as art galleries where you can buy antiques, sculptures, paintings, pre-Hispanic instruments, traditional dolls and clothes, besides the fact that there are countless interesting spots just a few steps away so you can enjoy different landscapes that show the mining life of a country that no longer exists, but still has an echo in our days.



Fig. 17
Building in ruins at the Ex Hacienda de Sta. Brigida.

Fig. 18
A view to the west from a large window in the Cince Señores Mine



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• Book two days in advance to
take the complete tour.

Remnants of two wars

CAÑADA DE ORTEGA



The Ex Hacienda Cañada de Ortega in Salamanca, Guanajuato, is a historical treasure located in a landscape that inspires visitors to explore its surroundings, immersing themselves in the revolutionary heritage of the area. This site preserves its architectural and cultural patrimony, offering its visitors a fascinating insight into the daily life of a Hacienda, with chronicles from the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th century.



Salamanca, Guanajuato.



1900 m above sea level.



Hiking



Temperate and Semi-humid



89 km SE / 1:30 hrs.
from León, Gto.





Fig. 19
Domes of the Ex Hacienda de Cañada de Ortega

Located at one of the four ramifications of the old Camino Real that traverses the entire state, this Ex Hacienda continues to be a strategic spot, this time for those looking to take horseback trails, rappel and zip-line or to simply enjoy the natural scenery of the Cañada de Ortega.

Those who are willing will be able to visit the Hacienda's old quarters, where there are still objects and stories preserved in its architectural remains, with traces of the Reform War, the Mexican Revolution and the Cristero War, such as the vestiges of its chapel, survivor of a major fire during the times of the persecution.

Fig. 21

Archways of the central courtyard of the Ex Hacienda that currently are part of the main entrance.

Fig. 22

Interior courtyard of the Ex Hacienda



The hacienda's natural landscape, testimony of the country's transformation, with its wide green fields, luxuriant trees and preserved natural areas, will take visitors on a journey through local history. Attendees will be able to enjoy endemic cuisine prepared directly on site, host a small trip or meeting, and if the hacienda's

magic convinces them, why not host a destination wedding.

The Ex Hacienda Cañada de Ortega is a living proof of the history and the colonial architecture of this unique region. Travelers looking for a glimpse into a time gone by will find in this place a peaceful retreat that evokes the grandeur of an age already gone.

Cañada de Ortega is one of the Haciendas that were built along the old Camino Real. It preserves within its walls hundreds of years of history.


TURISMO SALAMANCA

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• Book with one week in advance





1.2 Shelters for the mind

Sometimes we would like to have a safe place where we could pull out all our ideas, put them in some sort of order and then, with all the peace of mind in the world, return the orderly stuff back to our thoughts. And the fact is that many times the mess of our daily thoughts, the infinite collection of minor dilemmas that modern life involves, or the environmental dust that permeates our lives from one week to the next, turns us into mechanical beings, or worse, into walking muddles.

At the moment there is no specific device with the characteristics needed to automatically fix this, not even a device that can do it in an imaginable way... what does exist are several places in Guanajuato that are capable, by immersing us in an entirely contrasting atmosphere with the actual reality in which we live, and that can send us back with a considerable part of our ideas efficiently reconnected, refined and, perhaps, with a few improvements.

Most of the landmarks in this book will serve that purpose, but we present here a couple of highlights that we can guarantee will bring you back home revitalized, soul-soothing places that will recall pieces of your identity that you may have been in touch with a while ago, and bring light into many things that you might not even realize had darkened a little bit.

In this way you will find the remnants left by some extinct volcanoes of our Guanajuato, in their enormous caves you can get tiny thinking about the volcanic era of the planet and how distant we are from it, because nothing like thinking about how big is the universe to understand that maybe our problems are not as big as we imagined before arriving to the beautiful Valle de Santiago.

At El Juguete dam in Jerécuaro you will find yourself suddenly suspended 30 meters above the ground, because there is a hanging bridge (kinda basic but safe), don't look down! If by chance

you do look down, you can be sure that your thoughts will restart.

It is unknown by many people that Guanajuato has two churches immersed in water: one at La Purisima dam, which protects the ruins of the Templo de la Virgen de los Dolores; and at the Solis dam, where you will find yourself in front of a strange natural phenomenon, in which history is embedded and shows at times the Puruagüita Church, allowing you to navigate over ancient structures sunk in the water.



«From below arose the noise of
the whole city;
from above descended the silence
of the whole infinite.
I really don't know what it is
about the sky up here
that makes the universe crystal
clear.»

-Efrén Hernández, novelist, poet,
dramatic writer and scriptwriter
from León, Guanajuato.

Two moments at the same time

PRESA SOLIS



The Solís Dam in Acámbaro, Guanajuato is not only a water body that dazzles with its natural beauty, but a place that harbors a rare treasure. Its tranquil waters hide submerged ancient ruins that, thanks to the practice of canoeing, have become an exceptional tourist attraction.



Acámbaro, Guanajuato.



1900 m above sea level.



Canoeing



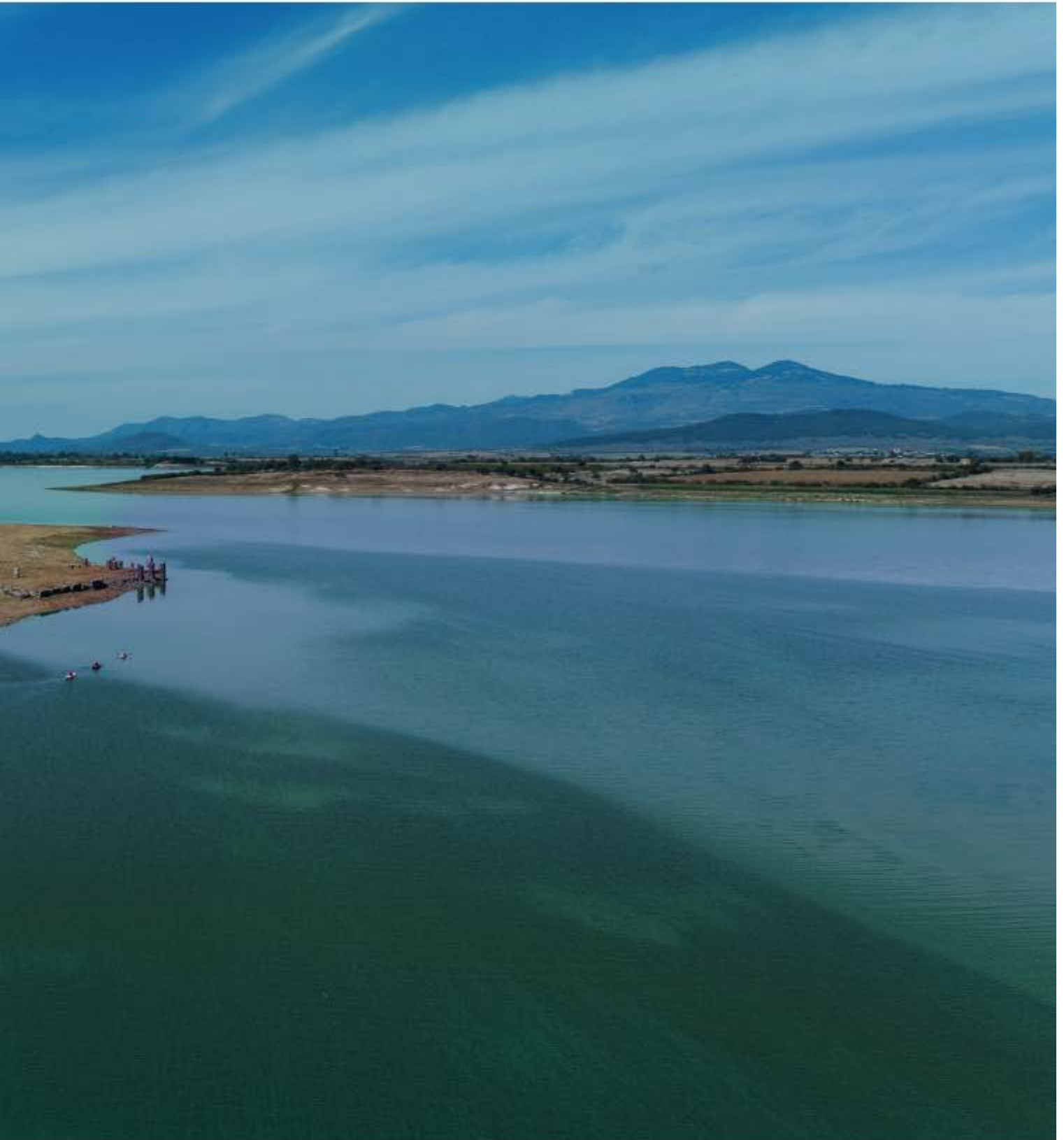
Semi-warm Sub-humid



218 km / 3:00 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Fig. 25
Ruins of the Temple of St. Paul the Apostle in
the middle of the Solís Dam.





Between 1939 and 1949, as a result of the construction of this dam, it was necessary to relocate several small villages settled in the area that today is the bed of the dam, leaving as a testimony only a few buildings that have withstood 75 years of erosion by water and sun. The most visible is the Puruagüita Church, erected in honor of St. Paul the Apostle in the 18th century.

In times of high water it is possible to recreate the conditions required to navigate around the ruins of the bell tower, in a sight previously reserved for nesting pigeons. The rest of the year it can be seen in its entirety, as an island in the middle of the dam.

This unusual setting allows for opportunities to capture beautiful photographs that highlight the submerged history beneath the dam's waters. The weathered walls of the ruins, now inhabited by aquatic wildlife, add a touch of wonder.



Fig. 28
Visitors at the ruins of the Temple of the Apostle St. Paul

Fig. 29
Canoeing through the Zatamayé Canyon



Visit the dam with a minimum group of 4 people.



Consider a full day for this activity, as the entire tour lasts between 7 and 10 hours.

The experience of exploring these submerged ruins is not only a visual journey, but also an opportunity to understand and appreciate the history that lies beneath the depths of this reservoir. Solis Dam offers a unique adventure for local history lovers, wildlife enthusiasts and photographers, making it a place where natural beauty blends with the mysteries of a submerged past.

The broad extension of the dam makes available a big variety of aquatic activities in the following months after the rain season. One of the most attractive is kayaking across the Zatamayé Canyon, located near a small town with the same name, to the south of the municipality of Jerecuaro.



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Fig. 29 By Taranda Rafting

Out of this world

SEVEN LUMINARIES



Valle de Santiago,
Guanajuato.



1800 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Semi-warm Sub-humid



108 km /1:30 hrs
from León, Gto.



There was a time when this world was not for us to exist, a world we can only imagine, in which theories about when the seven luminaries of Valle de Santiago could have been formed simply disappear. Another, when the Guanajuato lowlands was a great lake, and gave enough space for nomadic indigenous peoples to settle in its path, between the disappeared water bodies and the extinct craters that still remain to this day.

Fig. 30

Flooded crater of the Hoya de Cintora or Andaracua volcano.





Those who understood phases of astronomy prior to our modern science argue that the configuration of the seven craters is geometrically coincident with the stars that shape the constellation of the Big Dipper, which is why they have been called the Seven Luminaries.

Each one of the luminaries has unique and different stories and geological characteristics, such as Rincón de Parangueo, in Purépecha Liricua, a crater that seems to take you to another planet, through a 500 m tunnel, where the only light comes from the other side; or Hoya de Álvarez, in Purépecha Membereca, with hot springs and cabins inside the crater. These to mention a few, there are actually more than 7 inactive volcanoes in “The Land of the Seven Luminaries”, with cave paintings, giant vegetables, lakes that turn colors and local tales that go from aliens to the distant ancestor



Wear comfortable clothes and hiking footwear.



Protect yourself from the sun with a sun hat or cap and use sunscreen.



Fig. 31

Access tunnel to the crater of the Rincón de Parangueo or Liricua volcano.

Fig. 32

Ash-covered rock formations within the Rincón de Parangueo crater

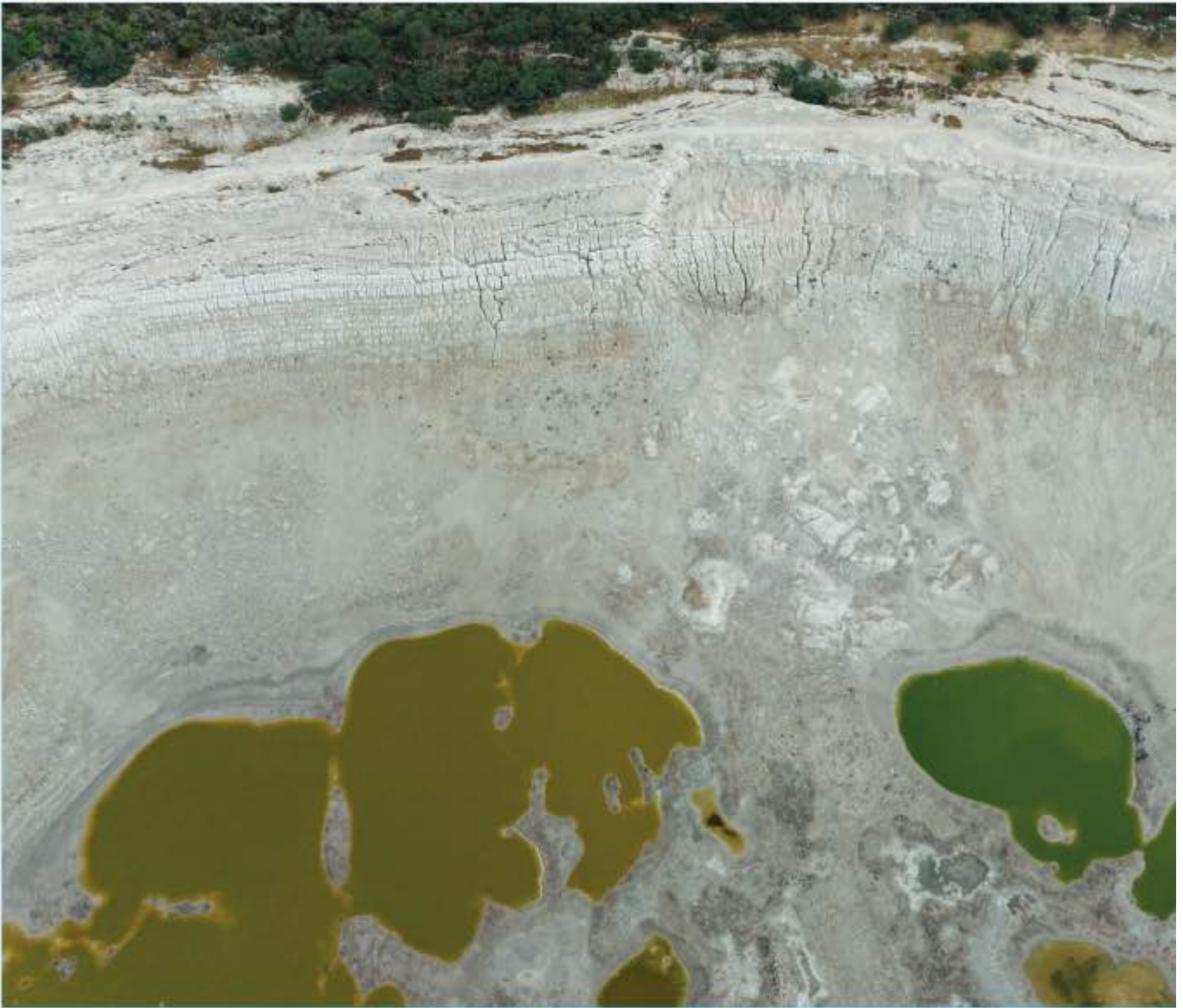


of the Loch Ness monster named Chac, however the most important are those that give it its name: Hoya de Cintora, La Alberca, Hoya de Solis, Hoya Blanca and Hoya de San Nicolas completes the septenna.

Valle de Santiago has enough attractions for the visitor, whether for an afternoon, or half a month, you can take a short walk to oxygenate the body or spend the whole day in the renewing of one's thoughts, and who knows, maybe even under the watchful eye of some other worlds.

Fig. 33
Crater of the Rincón de Parangueo or Liricua volcano

Fig. 34
Water bodies and ashes inside the crater of Rincón de Parangueo



The distribution of the seven craters coincides geometrically with that of the stars that make up the Great Bear constellation, which is why they have been called the Seven Luminaries.



**VALLE DE SANTIAGO
TOURISM OFFICE**

Jardín Principal Portal Hidalgo # 73
Valle de Santiago, Guanajuato



- The best time of year to visit the Luminarias is after the rainy season, since in some craters water pools are formed.

Vertigo over calmness

EL JUGUETE DAM



Jerécuaro,
Guanajuato.



2000 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Semi-warm Sub-humid



200 km SE / 2:40 hrs
from León, Gto.



Called "El Juguete", the dam is an emblematic place in Jerécuaro that captivates all visitors, but beyond its impressive structure and the amount of water it generates, one of the highlights is the impressive hanging bridge that is located about thirty meters above the dam.

This hanging bridge, with a wooden floor and woven ropes, is a unique attraction in the area and a true engineering highlight. Connecting two sides of the canyon and offering a privileged view of the dam, which can also be descended to cross a little juniper forest that grows between the canyon and a few monoliths.





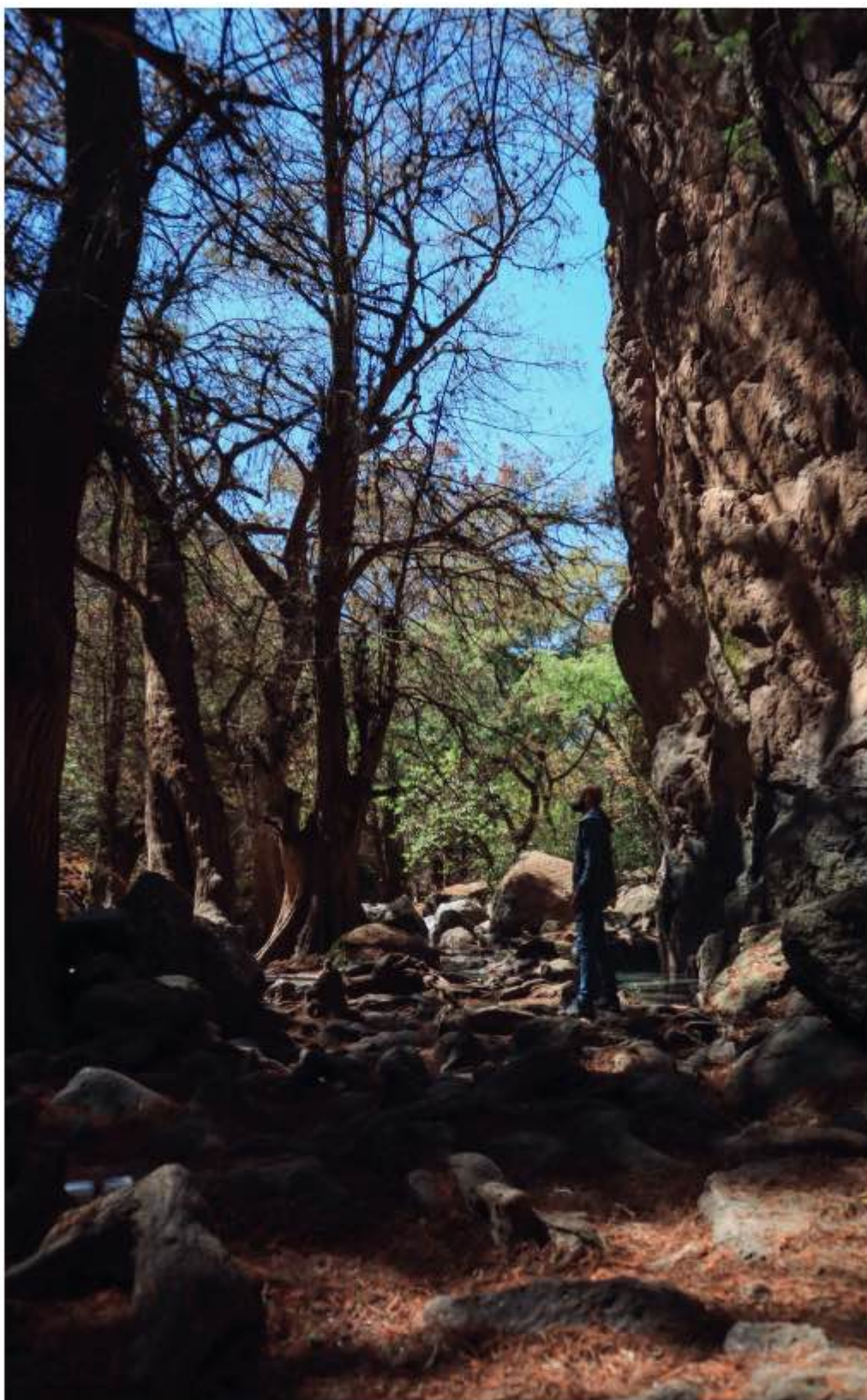
The dam takes its distinctive name from a nearby village, although it was originally named Presa Fray Angel Juarez or Presa del Angel when it was built in 1963. It is also known as Presa de las Adjuntas. On November 27th it is a popular tradition to celebrate the anniversary of the laying of the first stone with a small party, where you can taste local dishes such as tamales de ceniza and the traditionally cooked pork meat in red chili.

Fig. 36
Hanging bridge and El Juguete Dam

Fig. 37
Cañada at the bottom of the hanging bridge of the El Juguete Dam



Take the chance to enter the Sabino trail, but be aware that there is no phone signal along this trail.





Crossing the bridge is not for the agoraphobic: the crackling wood with every footstep and the swinging caused by the wind is undoubtedly an adrenaline rush. The sensation of walking over the bridge, hanging over the canyon, above such an imposing natural setting and with the murmur of the water as it spills over the curtain, is thrilling and provides a unique perspective, perfect for great Indiana Jones-style photographs...

When you go under the bridge and step into the water flowing out of the dam you can contrast the vertigo and adrenaline of the height with the calmness of the flow and the magnitude of the huge juniper trees that grow around. It is "El Juguete" a balance between wind and water, peace and adventure.



Fig. 38

Hiker at the bottom of Juguete Dam canyon

Fig. 39

Path of juniper trees (Sabinos) along the river that flows through the Juguete Dam.



**JERECUARO TOURISM
OFFICE**

Fray Angel Juarez #32
Colonia Centro
Jericuaro, Guanajuato



- In the bridge area there are palapas where you can rest and have lunch.

Zangarro, a sleeping village

LA PURISIMA DAM



Irapuato,
Guanajuato.



1800 m above sea level.



Canoeing.



Temperate and Semi-humid



65 km SE / 1:15 hrs.
from León, Gto.



A natural charm site and underwater discoveries, the La Purisima Dam in Irapuato is a magnetic attraction for adventure lovers. This natural reservoir becomes an idyllic setting to live unique experiences and enjoy a day outdoors in a peaceful environment with some hidden surprises.

The canoe trip across the calm waters of the dam is the mandatory activity: what makes it particularly intriguing are the submerged constructions, especially those of the Templo de la Virgen de los Dolores, built at the end of the 19th century. These flooded architectural ruins belonging to a town called Zangarro, flooded by edict in order to build the water dam





in 1979, provide a hint of mystery, creating a stunning landscape.

Unlike Presa Solís, at La Purísima it is possible to navigate through the ruins, not just around them, as long as the rainy season allows it: not too much, not too little, so we recommend visiting right at the end of the rainy season. It is said that you should be lucky if you are able to navigate through the church, although for the last 3 years it has been possible.

Fig. 40

Remains of the Templo de la Virgen de los Dolores.

Fig. 41

Remains of the interior of the Temple of the Virgen de los Dolores



The overall atmosphere at La Purisima Dam is serene and peaceful, making it a haven for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and connect up with nature. It offers visitors the opportunity to enjoy outdoor activities, exploring the area, taking beautiful photographs and simply relaxing in a mystical environment.

These architectural ruins belonging to a town called Zangarro, flooded by edict in order to build the water dam in 1979



Fig. 42
Top of columns and window inside the ruins



Fig. 43
Mirror of water reflecting the pendentives of temple's interior dome.



IRAPUATO TOURISM OFFICE
Ramón Barreto de Tabora 770
Col. La Moderna
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• Photos by Pita Madera

2. Following trails







2.1 Scenic lookouts

Since humans had it clear that the key to survival, as long as we are not a predator with claws and fangs or the agile legs of the gazelle, depends on maintaining visual control of the territory, humanity has realized that having everything that it needs visually gathered is not only necessary to flow peacefully and comfortably through this existence, but it also gives us immediate reassurance.

This is probably the biological basis for the fact that we enjoy so much those sites from where everything can be seen and also that, even in the movies, the leaders of the armies of any era are portrayed seeing the future fields.

Perhaps that's why we love to take pictures in such places, from the Christ the Redeemer in Sao Paulo to some of our local examples, the viewpoint of San Miguel de Allende or El Pípila in the capital of Guanajuato, because they are a warranty of a great picture, of a high satisfaction, and a double experience in which we experience our smallness facing a dominant landscape and, at the same time, that there is not a single construction out of reach of our own eyes.



In Acámbaro, for example, the Cerro del Toro, which with its countless steps announces the reward of climbing each and every one of them, shows us that there is clearly much more to see than the commonplace tourist experiences attributed to it.

And what to say about the Cerro de la Bufa, which rises among the broken streets of Guanajuato, to claim the sovereignty of the city that chose it to prostrate at his feet. Undoubtedly its best feature are the sunrises that can be seen from the top.

Scenic lookouts is a chapter with two faces: the pleasant fatigue that comes from a Herculean climb up a hill and the ancestral tranquility that comes from having a landscape dominated by the view.

«Adam of the universe:
where you place your plant
the earth is touched
of hidden paradises.»

-Margarita Paz,
a poet from San Luis de La Paz

A sight over Cuévano

LA BUFA HILL



La Bufa Hill or Cerro de la Bufa, majestic and often lost in Guanajuato's capital city landscape, stands like a watchtower on the horizon of Cuévano, which is how the local and nationally recognized writer, Jorge Ibarguengoitia, referred to this state capital municipality. Beyond its impressive presence



Guanajuato city



2300 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and Semi-humid



60 kms SE / 1:20 hrs.
from León, Gto.

— 80

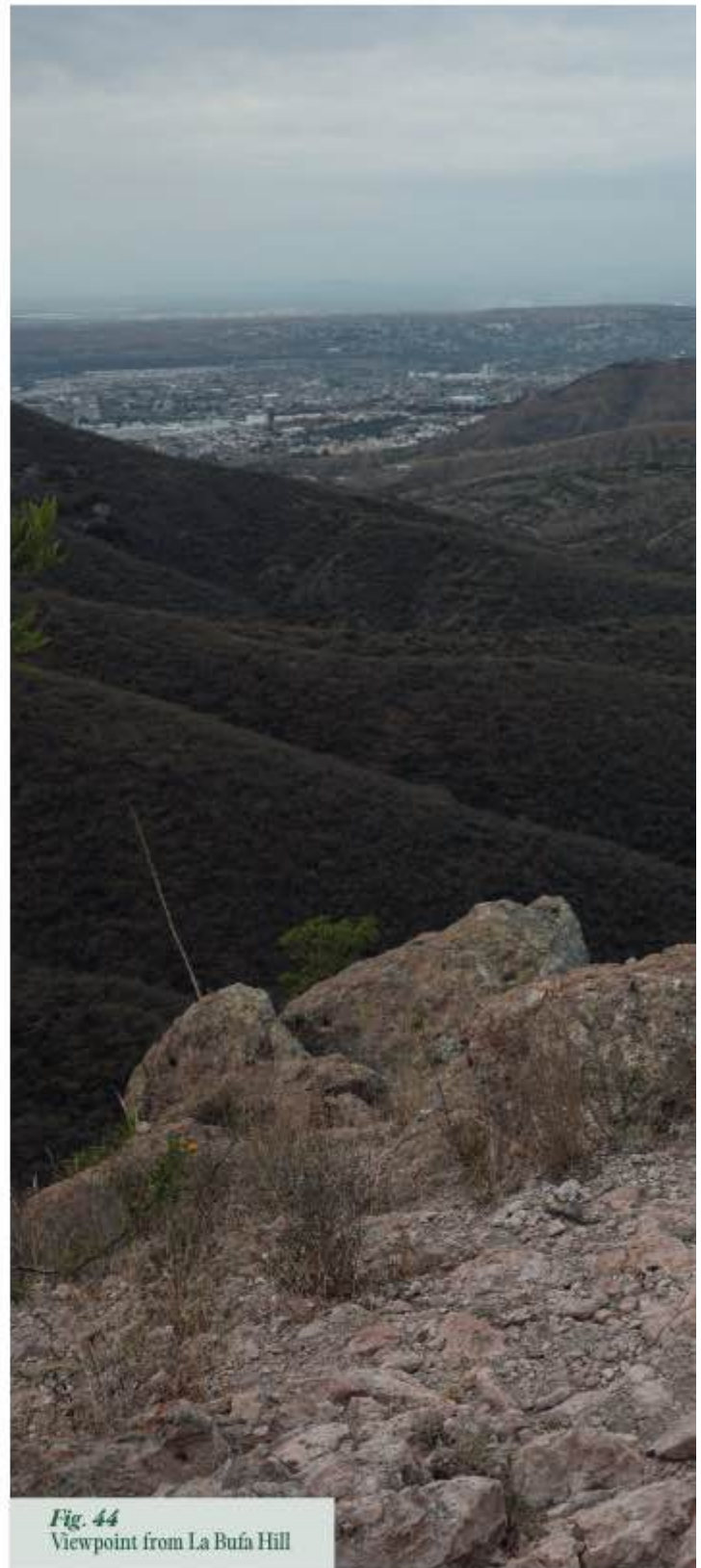


Fig. 44
Viewpoint from La Bufa Hill





Fig. 45
La Bufa Hill peak

Fig. 46
Cyclist in a rocky passage

Fig. 47
Hiker inside the cave of St. Ignatius of Loyola



On July 31, the celebration of St. Ignatius of Loyola takes place inside the cave.



from the city, this mountain elevation is the perfect scenario for hiking enthusiasts and nature adventurers.

Its serpentine routes are a rewarding challenge, inviting adventurers and hiking enthusiasts to discover its secrets. From the initial trails that gently wind into the hillside to the more challenging routes that unveil breathtaking panoramas, each step reveals a different part of its natural beauty and picturesque scenery.

It is possible to reach the foothills by vehicle, making it an accessi-

ble destination if you are looking for an easily reachable trail for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages, but it also has cliffs and rocks for those initiated in more rigorous climbs.

The trails leading to the top of La Bufa provide an exciting mix of exuberant local flora and the unique geology that defines the region. During the traverse, explorers witness a rich biodiversity, with native flora ranging from cacti to thorny shrubs, creating a symphony of colors and aromas.





From this viewpoint, those brave enough to climb are rewarded with 360-degree panoramic views of the city, its historic monuments and the vast expanse of the surrounding geography.

Cerro de la Bufa motivates those who choose to visit it to engage in the hiking activity, offering a per-

fect getaway to seek the perfect combination of physical challenge, connection with nature, and breathtaking sights. It is a tribute to the natural beauty and history embodied in its soil, representing an equilibrium between the wild and the accessible that turn each hike into a memorable experience.



Fig. 48

Hiker from the viewpoint on the hill of La Bufa

Fig. 49

Top of La Bufa Hill

Fig. 50

Rocky texture of the crags of La Bufa hill



**GUANAJUATO
TOURISM OFFICE**

Guanajuato- Marfil, Noria Alta,
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- Wear comfortable clothing and footwear as you have to climb the hill, carry plenty of water..

A big challenge

CERRO DEL TORO



Natural Protected Area
in Acámbaro, Guanajuato



2100 m above sea level



Hiking



Temperate and Semi-humid



230 km SE / 3:00 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Cerro del Toro, located in Acámbaro, is a natural landmark that challenges those seeking an experience of both adventure and contemplation. Its exhaustive ascents are a testing of physical endurance, a steep and challenging route that leads to the top of this imposing hill. This climb can be considered quite a trek, but the prize of reaching the top is undeniably fulfilling.

Each ascending step offers a new perspective, allowing the visitor to contemplate the beautiful panorama that unfolds in front of the explorer's eyes. The natural diversity of the area,





Fig. 51
Stairway to the Cerro del Toro chapel

Fig. 52
Acámbaro from the viewpoint on the
Cerro del Toro

Fig. 53
Bike descent by the stairway



Be aware that the tours depart
between 7:00 and 8:00 am



The top of Cerro del Toro not only represents a physical achievement, but a gift to the senses and the soul, giving the opportunity to reflect on the endeavor, self-improvement and the immensity of the wilderness.



Fig. 54
Cross-country cycling downhill

the ancient trees and the panoramic view of the city of Acámbaro, offers a breathtaking visual experience that not everyone can achieve.

To explain the situation, it is enough to say that in the early mornings, at more than 2,000 meters above sea level, men, women and children can be seen ascending. Some of them do it each day, others do it on weekends.

However, there are those who have made this orographic highlight an extreme sport: whether for moun-

Fig. 55
Flagpole at the summit, sight from the viewpoint at Cerro del Toro.

tain biking, bike-cross or the popular downhill, the challenge can be increased constantly according to the intentions of your inner risk-taker.

The stairs guide adventurers and nature enthusiasts through a stimulating, but also captivating journey. The top of Cerro del Toro not only represents a physical achievement, but a gift to the senses and the soul, giving the opportunity to reflect on the endeavor, self-improvement and the immensity of the wilderness.



**ACAMBARO TOURISM
OFFICE**

Hidalgo #373, Col. Centro
Acámbaro, Guanajuato
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- If you are going downhill on your bike, wear a helmet for your safety.

Skydream

EL SALTO VACATIONAL CENTER



Tierra Blanca



2200 m above sea level.



Skydream.



Temperate and semiarid.



195 km E / 3:15 hrs
from León, Gto.



Resting in the heights is an out-of-the-ordinary experience that has become a reality thanks to Skydream, at the El Salto Vacation Center.

Skydream is to lie in floating hammocks suspended 30 meters high among trees and cliffs in the mountainous area of the municipality of Tierra Blanca. It is something that combines excitement and adrenaline with the relaxing sensation of gently swinging in a hammock.



Fig. 51

Visitor resting in a hammock at a height of more than 6m.

Fig. 52

View of the Rincón de Cano Community, from the El Salto Recreational Center.





Fig. 53, 54
View of the foothills of the Sierra Gorda

The most amazing aspect of this adventure is undoubtedly the panoramic view, since observing the world from 30 meters high provides a completely new perspective and an impression of grandeur that one rarely faces.

Being in this cocoon of peace and tranquility can be felt in two





ways: contemplating the sunset for a period of two hours, or staying overnight in the sky to watch the sunrise through the clouds. The fact of being suspended at that height, although initially challenging, provides a sense of security, allowing you to fully enjoy

the surroundings and experience an unparalleled peace.

In addition to this, El Salto Vacation Center offers adventure and adrenaline lovers activities such as zip-lining, rappel and climbing.

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TURISMO TIERRA BLANCA

Renovación s/n Col. Centro
52+ 419 234 0095



• You can also do other activities such as paragliding, zip-lining, rappel or rock climbing.

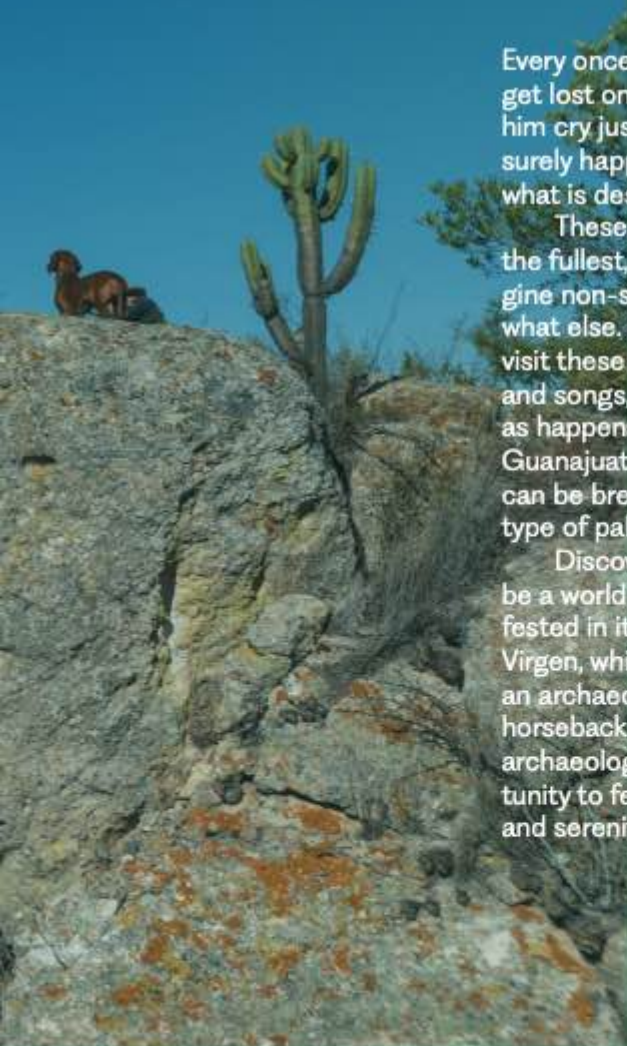


2.2 Hidden treasures

Every once in a while a human being is lucky enough to get lost on a sidewalk and find something that makes him cry just by witnessing so much beauty, and that has surely happened to the people who have discovered what is described here.

These are places full of mysticism and inspiring to the fullest, sites that make it impossible not to imagine non-stop stories, songs, poems, and who knows what else. It is so true that frequently our local poets visit these places in order to come up with rhymes and songs, which they later take to the local festivities, as happens in the Platanal de Xichú, in the north of Guanajuato, where the culture of the Huasteca region can be breathed in the scent of pine and palo mulato. (A type of palm tree).

Discovering natural treasures in Guanajuato can be a world of contrasts and splendor, which is manifested in its diverse scenery, such as the Cañada de la Virgen, which is filled with canyons over 50 meters high, an archaeological site or a river that can be crossed on horseback. The radiance of its natural reserves and the archaeological heritage of these places are an opportunity to feel an intimate encounter with history, culture and serenity.



From stunning hills to flowery valleys and desert scenes. In these natural paradises, the meeting with the endemic flora and fauna becomes a rare experience: observing desert and mountain varieties, where cacti and other endemic plants adapted to arid climate found their home, is especially amazing, as in the Cañón del Águila Cola Roja, which hosts nine varieties of cactus, mushrooms, lavender and rosemary, among other aromas.

Venture in, who knows, maybe you are destined to become a discoverer of a new paradise hidden among our lands, finding a harmony between the majesty of the earth and the ancestral history that has left its mark in these territories.



«Discovering these natural treasures in Guanajuato means appreciating the diversity, harmony and respect for a breathtaking natural environment.»

For the adventurers

RED EAGLE CANYON



San Miguel de Allende,
Guanajuato



1900 m above sea level



Horseback riding



Temperate and Semi-humid



120 km SE / 2:00 hrs.
from León, Gto.



At the top of Cerro de las Cruces, near San Miguel de Allende, is the impressive Red Tail Eagle Canyon, a place where the excitement and magnificence of semi desertic landscapes merge to create an unexpected experience.

This destination, renowned for its adventure tourism, offers a range of activities that unleash adrenaline and stimulate the senses. It is a breathtaking natural scenery.

The heart of the Red Tail Eagle Canyon beats with the promise of emotion: Euphoria is unleashed with its zip lines, allowing visitors to glide over the spectacular panorama, contemplating from the heights the immensity of this canyon and the





inflowing tributary of a spring rising from an extinct volcano.

The entertainment options are as varied as they are enthralling: from ATV rides through rugged terrain to horseback rides that take explorers through steep tracks, rappelling, zip-lining, hiking and the crown jewel of the place, the hanging bridge. Red Tail Eagle Canyon offers a diverse range of experiences to satisfy every traveler's adventurous spirit.

In addition, for those seeking a heavenly perspective, there is the

Fig. 56
Horsemen on the Cerro de las Cruces tour

Fig. 57
Tourist family crossing hanging bridge



This tour takes a total of 6 hours.



For your safety, do not leave the marked trails.

SURROUNDING TRAILS

opportunity to take a hot air balloon flight over the canyon, providing a spectacular panoramic view and a sense of absolute freedom. This hot air balloon trip carries passengers over the vastness of the canyon, providing a view reserved for sparrows, mockinbirds, and justly so, red-tailed eagles, who enjoy a unique and spectacular view of this amazing landscape.

Hiking is another exciting activity in this natural paradise, as hikers can explore the winding trails, discovering the native semi-desert flora, crystalline

streams and the wildlife that inhabits this environment. Every step is an opportunity to appreciate the unparalleled beauty and tranquility that this wild little corner has to offer.

Excellence in safety and expert guidance are fundamental pillars in every Red Tail Eagle Canyon adventure offered by San Miguel Parque de Aventura.



Fig. 58
Group of tourists on an ATV tour at sunset.

Fig. 59
A family hiking on a trail into the canyon.



**SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE
TOURISM OFFICE**

Principal #10, Zona Centro, San
Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato
52+ 415 154 7175

Photos By:
Elizabet Pasma

Heaven on earth

EL PLATANAL



Xichú, Guanajuato.



1000 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Semiarid and Warm.



328 km NE / 6:15 hrs.
from León, Gto.



"El Platanal" is a testimony to the beauty of nature and an open call to escape from the daily life's noise. Here, simplicity and calmness contrast with the intensity of the journey to arrive there. It is a refuge created to protect an idyllic place, a natural and rustic haven where everything is uncrowded and the pristine waters wrap you in a refreshing bath.

The journey to Platanal, a little more than 60 kilometers from the municipal capital of Xichú, is in itself a



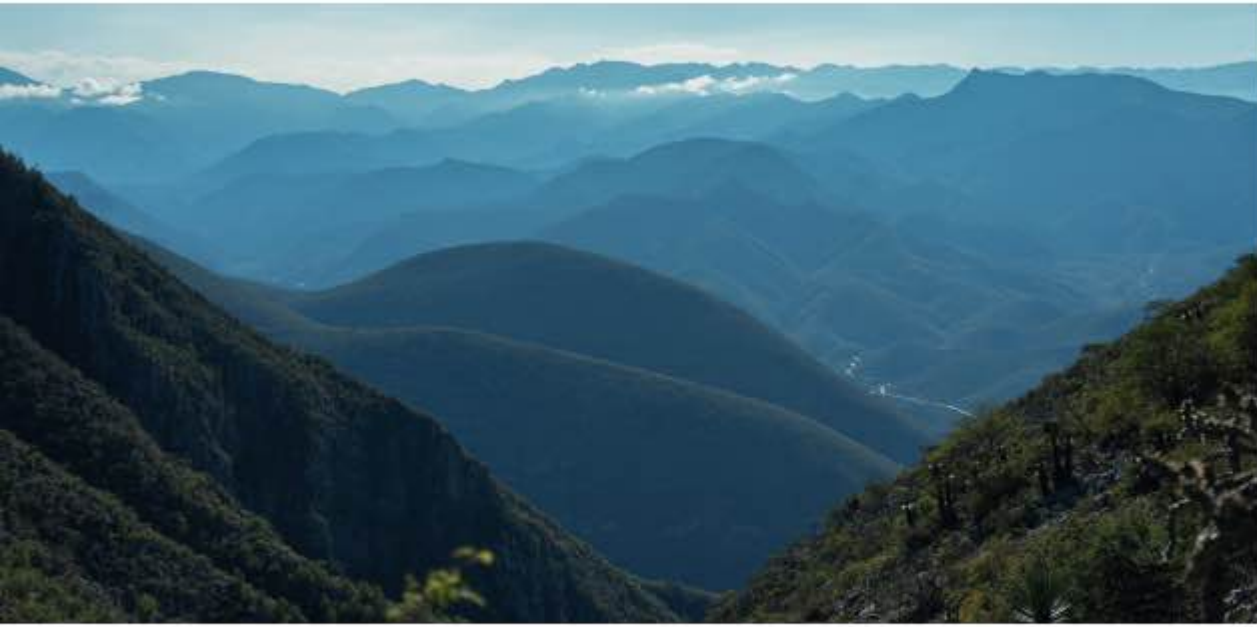


Fig. 60
Panoramic view to the west of the
Huasteca Guanajuatense

Fig. 61
Ecotourism Camp "El Platanal"

Fig. 62
River that divides the states of
Guanajuato and San Luis Potosí.



mesmerizing journey, skirting the shores of the Abajeño River between the mountains of the Huasteca of Guanajuato, through Palo Mulatos and coniferous forests, between the mountains and the voladero. It is a road rather suitable for an all terrain vehicle, there is no cell phone signal most of the way and you will not be able to go faster



If possible, make the trip in an all-terrain vehicle.



Fig. 63
River flow

than 40 or 50 kms per hour. However, the more courageous will not find this to be a limiting factor.

You will be able to stop the car and watch from different points the magnitude of the Sierra Gorda of Guanajuato, the ever-changing flora and the predominant fauna, mainly birds such as the Red-headed Vulture, which dominates from the sky, as if it were trying to soar over the passers-by.

At the end of the route, this natural shelter offers rustic spaces perfect for enjoying an outdoor picnic, you can even have Wi-fi while

contemplating the waters of the Santa Maria River under the shade of an old Sabino tree. The same transparent waters invite relaxation and contemplation as they are ideal for a refreshing dip or a short canoeing trip, depending on the affluent.

There is a guard post with simple but cozy cabins, as well as areas equipped for camping and reconciling with nature. If you prefer a more adventurous experience, there are trails to be explored in the surrounding area where you can discover and enjoy spectacular panoramic views.



The red-headed american vulture can reach a wingspan of up to 180 cm and inhabits different areas throughout the American continent.

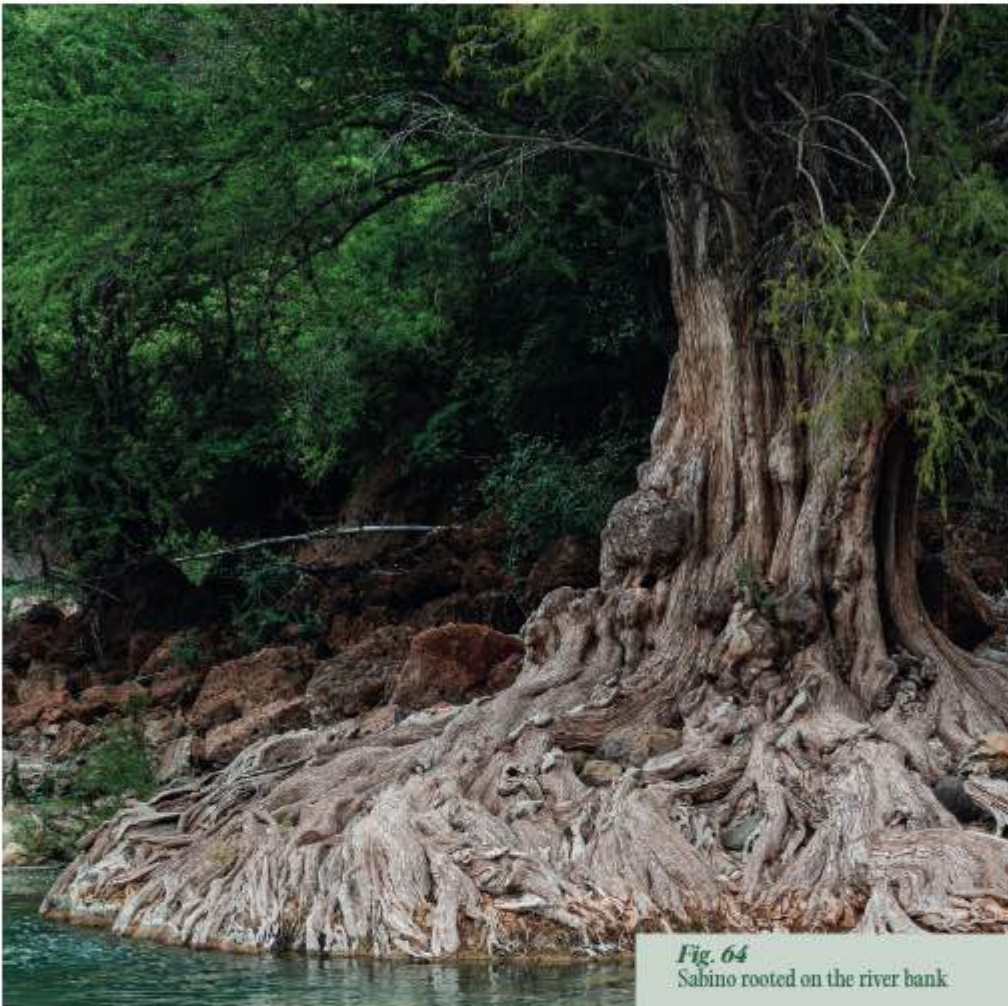


Fig. 64
Sabino rooted on the river bank.



XICHÚ TOURISM OFFICE
Jardín Unión #10, Zona Centro.
Xichú, Guanajuato
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• No telephone signal once you get into the landscape

Through the Coyote Pass

COYOTE CANYON



San Miguel de Allende,
Guanajuato



1900 m above sea level.



Horseback riding



Temperate and Semi-humid



120 km SE / 2:00 hrs.
from León, Gto.



From a time when the vastness of Arid America was such that only a few dared to enter on horseback, between canyons and rivers into the wild and untamed, has arisen such a passion that, for at least a century, the collective imaginary has been devoted to create legends, songs and movies, with the mythology of horsemen taming unknown territories. There are so many movies that there is a film genre just to group them together.

Fig. 65
Horseback riders across the hillside.

Fig. 66
Horseback riders galloping through the canyon along the creek.





Nowadays we can only imagine the sensation of marveling for the first time at the imposing nature, while being one with the beast, like the cowboys of yesteryear, enjoying sunsets on the horizon and crossing water bodies. Or we can also go to Coyote Canyon.

On the banks of Cañada de la Virgen in San Miguel de Allende, you can ride a horse and feel like in those wild and brave landscapes of the old western movies.

Coyote Canyon provides more than one adventure: all day long you can be at the farthest historical point from your daily routine, from a reckless gallop to a quiet horseback ride with your partner at sunset; or hanging from a rope rappelling down a 50-meter canyon.

To explore this area is to immerse oneself in a world of rugged cliffs, lush vegetation and an atmosphere of serenity that embraces the human



soul. The roar of the wind between the canyon walls and the murmur of the nearby creek create a natural symphony that accompanies each step along its trails, where riders and their mounts make their way through the winding paths, allowing visitors to capture the true grandeur of this place.

After a day full of adventures, visitors can relax in designated areas for a delicious and authentically insane

meal, admiring the sunset that tinges the high cliffs with warm colors, because love stories are not few in this natural scenery.

Fig. 67
Horseback riders crossing the creek

Fig. 68
Coyote Canyon cowgirl galloping along trails



Coyote Canyon provides more than one adventure: all day long you can be at the farthest historical point from your daily routine, from a reckless gallop to a quiet horseback ride with your partner at sunset

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**SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE
TOURISM OFFICE**

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Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato
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· At the Coyote Canyon facilities
you can store your backpack
before the ride.

SURROUNDING TRAILS





Remember to wear preferably hiking boots



Use sunscreen during the tour.

To visit this spot it is important to get the help of a tour operator, but we assure you that it will be worth it. It is much more than a simple adventure tourism destination: it is a place that awakens the senses, invites exploration and leaves an indelible mark on every adventurous soul that enters its bosom.


Fig. 69

Group of horseback riders at the viewpoint of the canyon.

3. Reflections in motion







3.1 Calm waters

In the serenity of nature, the water bodies rest like mirrors reflecting the sky, weaving a pacific harmony in the vastness of the earth, dancing to the sound of wind, which bring peace and stillness.

How many times the women of our native communities must have fixed their delicate faces in that silver liquid, how many times their men must have dyed pigments before going to war, meditating, always meditating, because the calm water invites us to do so, and most of the time we cannot refuse; we are more susceptible to the natural elements than we would like to accept.

Perhaps among the waters of the Colorado River that runs through Las Musas in the municipality of Manuel Doblado, you can connect with your own primitive roots, when you hear how the water pours through the roots of the willows and ahuehetes that spread out around it.

Or in the magical resting of the Zatamayé Canyon in Jerécuaro, you can see the echo of the moon in its waters that whisper crystal melodies, whispering secrets in its bed, guardian of stories and silences, embracing the night firmament with its immutable stillness, while the canyon rocks eternally threaten to come together, but never do.

And the ponds, as we have already said, shelters of stillness at the top of the mountain, reflect the harmony and balance of nature. They become canvases for the reflection of the colors of the sky and the life that surrounds them, of the white-tailed deer and the pinyon pine, as does the San Franco Dam, to welcome visitors to the Peña

Alta Protected Natural Area, municipality of San Diego de la Unión.

These calm water bodies, silent witnesses of the symphony of existence, invite the soul to find quietness, to submerge in silence and to listen to the poetry that emanates from their gentle concord.



«We are already arriving to Pénjamo
Its domes are already shining there,
Of Corralejo looks like a mirror
My beautiful Pénjamo.
... Its twin towers
Are two brackets,
Pinned to the sun»

–Joaquín Pardavé, from Pénjamo.

Inspiration among wise trees

LAS MUSAS



Manuel Doblado, Guanajuato



1800 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and Semi-humid



70 km SO / 1:15 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Las Musas, an iconic place just 20 kilometers from the municipal capital of Manuel Doblado, offers a visual and sensory delight for the nature lovers. Located among a forest of majestic weeping willows, this place gives a fantasy vision with streams that caress the centennial roots of the trees. The play of waterflow on the stones polished by the passing of time invites its visitors to immerse themselves in an almost mystical experience, through the more than 3,000 hectares that make up this Protected Natural Area.





Fig. 70
Roots of the junipers between rocks and water

Fig. 71
River channel between Las Musas juniper trees



This natural habitat, where the calm is interrupted only by the gentle hum of the wind, is more than just a forest. It is a haven of inspiration, like the muses of Greek mythology, for any creative soul or those in search of a corner of serenity and sensory stimulation.

In addition to the lullaby offered by the riverbed, Las Musas is a perfect place to bond with nature, its vast fauna composed of hummingbirds, ducks, woodpeckers, owls, mockingbirds, larks, sparrows, geese, herons and several other birds offer visitors a vast repertoire of songs.

Whether for the magic that the weeping willows radiate or for the sensation of being immersed in a fairytale scenario, Las Musas in Manuel Doblado will surely be a memorable experience for all those who seek to connect with nature in its most evocative state.

Fig. 72
Hiker on Las Musas stream



In the arrival area there are some tables where you can enjoy with your friends and family.



Fig. 73
Sabinos rooted in Las Musas creek



**MANUEL DOBLADO
TOURISM OFFICE**

Hidalgo y Corona S/N Zona Centro
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- Preferably visit after the rainy season.
- The rocks and roots are very slippery. Try to wear appropriate footwear.

Nearly flying

PEÑA ALTA



Going through a 600-meter zip line over the water body of the San Franco Dam in northern Guanajuato, must be one of the closest experiences to flying without wings.



Natural Protected Area in San Diego de la Unión, Guanajuato



2400 m above sea level.



Canoeing.



Temperate and Semi-humid



180 km NE / 2:50 hrs.
from León, Gto.

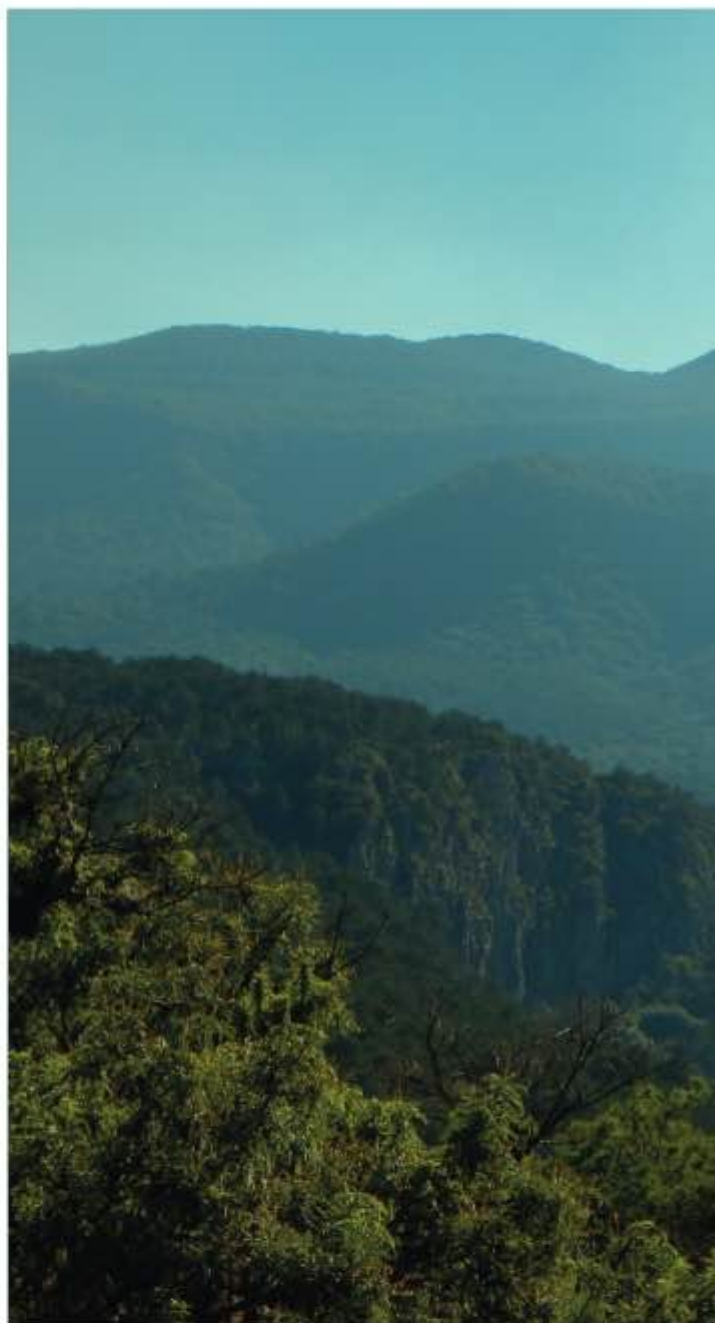


Fig. 74
Peña Alta Natural Protected Area



Always wear a helmet and safety equipment during water activities.



In addition to being an ideal place for adventurers and nature lovers, this Natural Protected Area allows the conservation of natural resources for the advantage of nearby communities.



Just ten kilometers from the town of San Diego de la Union, this bronco paradise enchants lovers of the outdoors and adventure, a magnificent space framed by the natural wealth of the Peña Alta Protected Natural Area, which provides a unique experience for those looking to get into hiking, thanks to its network of trails that wind through its rocky landscape.



Fig. 75
Wild cactus with tunas in Peña Alta PNA

Fig. 76
Peña Alta seasonal waterfalls

Fig. 77
Visitor crossing the Peña Alta dam on a zipline.



With the guidance of local experts, visitors have the opportunity to explore and learn about the fauna, flora and geography of this privileged region. The area provides chances for birdwatching, enjoying the tranquility of the forest and learning about nature conservation for the whole family. Local guides, knowledgeable about the local area, provide detailed information about the history, wildlife and geological formations, which enhances the experience and helps to better understand the importance of preserving this precious habitat.

Hikers can not only enjoy the view of the dam supported by a curtain of more than 600 meters long and its zip

line system with 900 meters of total extension; they can also take walks to the rocky outcrops of the reserve, discovering spectacular landscapes and thus promoting the connection with nature and the valuation of its preservation.

In addition to being an ideal place for adventurers and nature lovers, this Natural Protected Area allows the conservation of natural resources for the advantage of nearby communities, creating a mutually beneficial relation with the local ecosystem.



**SAN DIEGO DE LA UNIÓN
TOURISM OFFICE**

Plaza Principal #1, Col. Centro,
52+ 418 684 0005

Photographs by:
Ana Paola Rangel Romero

The magic of wandering

PRESA NUEVA



Jalpa de Cánovas



1800 m above sea level.



Senderismo.



Semicálido Subhúmedo.



45 km NO / 1:00 hrs.
from León, Gto.



If you are looking for a getaway with friends or family, a ride, a hike, or a day of kayaking in calm waters, Presa Nueva or Presa de Santa Efigenia, in the Magical Town of Jalpa de Canovas, is the ideal place to practice ecotourism.

This corner of the state of Guanajuato holds an ancestral history. Among its architectural curiosities is the largest dam in town, which has a spectacular masonry curtain in the

Fig. 77

Flow through the arches of Presa Nueva Dam





Fig. 78
Agave fields on the banks of
Presa Nueva



Fig. 79
Presa Nueva bridge

form of arches with a height of 27 meters and a length of 457 meters. The dam was built between two mountains at the end of the 19th century by architect Cecil Luis Long, remembered as "the architect of the Bajío".

Jalpa de Canovas is a small magical town located in Purisima del Rincon on the border of Guanajuato and Jalisco, worthy of a day trip under a good sun to forget the sedentary city life.



Take advantage of your visit and get to know other attractions of Jalpa de Canovas such as the Hacienda and the Templo del Señor de la Misericordia (Temple of the Lord of Mercy).



To enjoy the best experience we recommend to visit during the rainy season.

The majestic architecture of the Presa Nueva Dam dates back to the 19th century and supplied water resources to the Hacienda de Jalpa de Cánovas.

This picturesque town offers visitors the opportunity to connect with nature through its dams, haciendas and trails. All around, there are trails that lead to waterfalls, springs and picnic areas. Visitors can immerse themselves in local history and culture.

This dam, colloquially called "La Efigenia" when the rainy season arrives, is a spectacle, since through its arches you can admire the outflow of more than 40 thousand liters of water and its surface becomes a mirror of water that faithfully reflects the diverse rugged landscape of this area of Guanajuato, a wild beauty with cinematographic properties.



Fig. 80
Visitor on the Presa Nueva bridge



**TURISMO
JALPA DE CANOVAS**

Plaza Principal #1, Col. Centro,
52+ 418 684 0005

Photos by:
Ana Paola Rangel Romero

4. Between mountains and hills







4.1 Above us only sky

One thing that every foreigner notices and, at the same time, has a hard time explaining, is the distinctiveness of Guanajuato's skies, it has a "I don't know what," they murmur, while the sunset gilds their foreheads on some difficult and inaccessible mountain like the ones that nature liked to shape in this region.

And the fact is that, among the terroirs of Guanajuato, the sky unfolds like a chromatic canvas, changing its palette throughout the day. Efraín Huerta, the writer, rightly says that this sky is not of the sea, nor is it like that of the mountain ranges. On the horizon, during the summer solstice, the clear skies are dressed in deep, shimmering blue, reflecting the eternal promise of a new day.

In the warm hours of the afternoon, the veil of clouds gently drifts, taking on whimsical shapes, like a celestial artists' canvas. The sky becomes intertwined with the hues of the setting sun, in an ethereal play of light and shadow, spreading a soft orange hue that embraces the earth.

In the reserve of Los Agustinos, when the firmament turns nocturnal, the stars awaken timidly, flooding the sky with their luminosity, showing a unique and magnificent celestial spectacle that touches observers' souls, leaving them speechless at the vastness of the universe.

As we ascend the Sierra de Lobos, the mist gently touches the mountain peaks, enfolding valleys with its mystical mantle. Nature embraces itself in this serene mist, lending a timeless aura to the mountainous surroundings, where an incessant dance of light and shadow unfolds.

In the Sierra de Santa Rosa, the sky becomes nature's accomplice. The crisp leaves of the forest combine with the changing atmosphere, intertwining the colors of the sunset and the haze, like a visual poem that

fills the soul with echoes and mysteries. The transition from day to night creates an ephemeral and enchanting spectacle, a melody of nature that inspires contemplation and calm.

Thus, Guanajuato's sky offers a kaleidoscopic prism, a reflection of the diversity and harmony of its landscapes, inviting us to stop and delight in the magnificence of the cycles of cosmos and the magic that springs from every corner of this enchanted land.



«(...) A sound plain brown of songs,
/ a plain with hours marked by the
sun, / a sun only yours, a sun very
different / that is not of the seas nor
of the ridges; / a sun more perfect
than yours, Bajío, / it does not have
the sky anywhere. / In it marks the
days and nights of life in the Bajío:
the peasants do not have rifles [but]
today they are agrarians and
use a strong máuser. //

The rancheros sing and the hard
bodies of your womanhood shines,
at the same time they soften (with
the songs) the rough plows. / Your
poem, Bajío, is serene, / and your
land is perfect.»

–Efraín Huerta, silaoense.

The Giant Monks

SIERRA DE LOS AGUSTINOS



Acámbaro,
Guanajuato



3000 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and Semi-humid.



190 km SE / 3:10 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Let's be clear that if the popular expression is that in the sin goes the penance and that according to the toad is the stone, the effort to reach this point nestled in a steep elevation is proportional to the great spiritual retribution of being at the top of the Sierra de los Agustinos.

Several religious orders passed through the area of the Huasteca and the Sierra Gorda, but it was the Augustinians who left their name stuck in the south of Guanajuato, in this exuberant and energetic place, where reverie is the tonic for the traveler, who steps on this place located between Jerécuaro, Acámbaro and Tarimoro.

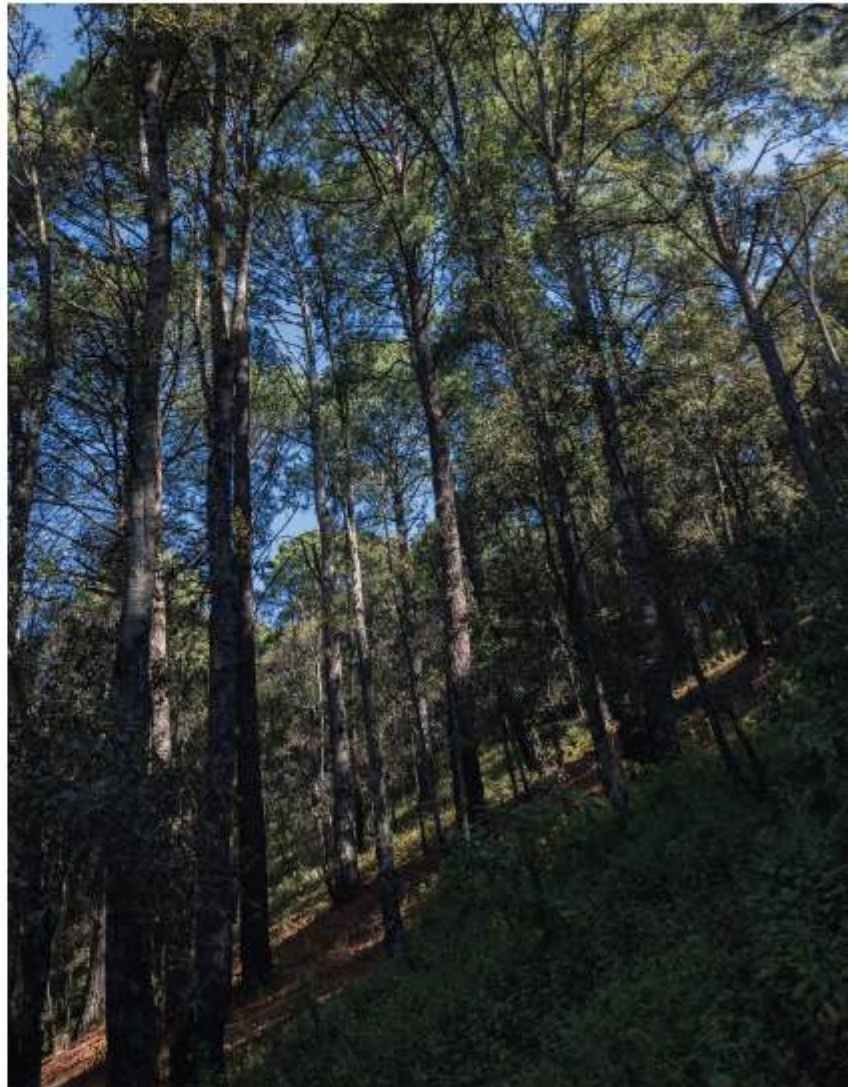




Fig. 78
Hikers ascending one of the summits.

Fig. 79
Las Cruces village Church

Fig. 80
Holm oak forest on sierra slopes



Perhaps the best route to reach these giants is Acámbaro, on the road to the community of Las Cruces where, by the way, they have their own version of the Taj Mahal: the Temple of Las Cruces, dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe, which can be seen by the road, although it is worth the detour.

As you get closer, the Sierra begins to take over the landscape: the vegetation changes, the temperature cools and the trails start to become narrow, even denying vehicles access: fields of flowers, mist of mythological

reminiscences that envelop temples from the age of the Spanish conquest, as well as archaeological vestiges and, above all, a vegetation development that leads us to the illustrated visions of foliage in the Mesozoic era, and suddenly the tourist can find himself surrounded by an infinity of trees of colossal height, serene and silent, but always maintaining their majesty as if they were aware of it. And among all the greenery, windows above the entire territory, as it is the highest point in the state of Guanajuato.

SURROUNDING TRAILS

Fig. 81

Slopes of the Los Agustinos Sierra

Fig. 82

Paths through Los Agustinos.



When you reach the top you can enjoy a wonderful view from the highest point of Guanajuato.

At night, it would seem that these trees pray in a cosmic language that only they and ancient Pulsars know, a forgotten language with which the stars keep secret about what the young vacationers do at Sierra de los Agustinos.

Hiking, wellness, camping and whatever you can think of is available in this point of our state that not everyone is willing to experience.





ACAMBARO TOURISM OFFICE

Hidalgo #373, Col. Centro
Acámbaro, Guanajuato
52+ 417 115 1542



• The activity is recommended for people with basic physical conditioning, without cardio-pulmonary pathology or pathology that makes moderate intensity physical activity difficult.



At night, it would seem that these trees pray in
a cosmic language that only they and ancient
pulsars know.



Fig. 83
Los Agustinos Sierra from one of its viewpoints.

Road to Santa Rosa...

SIERRA DE SANTA ROSA



Guanajuato city



2600 m above sea level.



MTB (Biking)



Temperate and Semi-humid.



75 km SE / 1:20 hrs.
from León, Gto.



"La Sierra de Guanajuato", completes the verse of the song by the immortal José Alfredo Jiménez, knowing that this immensity of land is beautiful and that no matter what time of year you choose to visit it, the majesty of its boundaries ensures a beautiful landscape to show you, to show you off, because our sierra is beautiful and it does know it.





Fig. 84
Peralillo Dam in the Santa Rosa mountain range.

Fig. 85
Visitor crossing the dam on a zipline.

Fig. 86
Hiker from hills around the dam.

If you go between spring and summer the water bodies, such as the Peralillo Dam, will have risen and you will find yourself in front of a whitish land that contrasts with a wide and lush green foliage.

On the other hand, if you visit between autumn and winter, the trees will show you a dominant yellow and bare, shiny trunks, as well as the tremendous sound of the leaves being blown by the wind up and down the hills.



💡 Please note that there is an entrance fee to the Peralillo Dam.

💡 Remember that water activities inside the dam are prohibited



From the freedom of camping in the most simple way to the glamorous possibility of glamping in an Airbnb, everything is available in this Sierra, there is something for everyone, here there is mezcal produced by local hands as well as many other arts and crafts, hotels and restaurants. For all these reasons the Sierra de Guanajuato is one of the best when it comes to showcasing the best of the very best in our state.

It is considered one of the hiking capitals of Guanajuato with almost forty thousand hectares of extension, this huge collection of natural beauties is more than close if you are tired of the urban side of our beautiful cities, just a few minutes away from Guanajuato, San Miguel de Allende, Leon or Dolores Hidalgo, birthplace of the Mexican National Independence.

The sierra is beautiful, has mysticism and its nights are clean and starry, but be careful, it is the habitat of animals that might be not very friendly so take your precautions before going too deep.



Fig. 87
Peralillo Dam from viewpoint



GUANAJUATO TOURISM OFFICE

Guanajuato- Marfil, Noria Alta, Km 1.5
Guanajuato, Guanajuato
52+ 473 73 2 1175



- Pets in the area are welcome
- The journey from the community of Santa Rosa community can be complicated for lower cars

Like guarding the passage of time

SIERRA DE LOBOS



San Felipe,
Guanajuato



2600 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and Semi-humid



43 km NE / 00:55 min
from León, Gto.



Sierra de Lobos stands as a silent witness to the passage of time and natural grandeur. The rocks that emerge from this mountainous landscape seem to silently watch over the history and evolution of the entire region.

Fig. 88
Rock formations in "Los Panales".



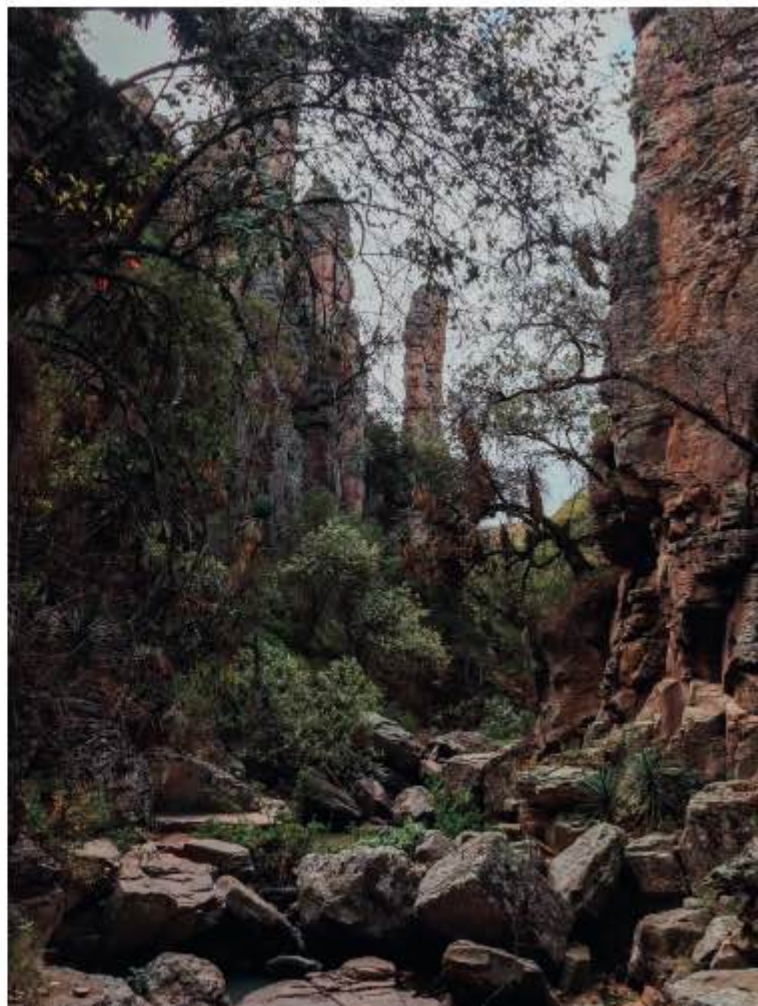


Fig. 89
Vegetation in Sierra de Lobos

Fig. 90
Rock path in the area of "Los Panales".

These stunning rock formations, such as "Los Panales", not only offer a dazzling panoramic view, but are also a perfect setting for exploring and venturing out. Its colossal rock monoliths and undulating landscapes make it a popular destination for hikers, nature lovers and those seeking an escape amidst the tranquility of the wilderness.

However, the vastness of the sierra and its rugged relief provide endless outdoor activities. Hiking, mountaineering, rappelling and bird watching are among the main activities. The intrepid adventurers will enjoy more challenging trails that bring a sense of accomplishment and gratification as they reach the peaks of the rocks that protect the surroundings.





To get to the area you must leave your car at one of the viewpoints along the road and go down the sierra for about 20 minutes



There is no phone signal in the area so it is advisable to always keep contact with your companions.

The endemic flora is a visual delight: cacti, shrubs and a variety of species offers a natural refuge for wildlife. This is why it is recommended mostly during the rainy season, in order to enjoy a vast array of streams and water bodies.

The most impressive aspect of the Sierra de Lobos is its ability to transport visitors to a world apart, a realm of solitude and wonder. The peace and tranquility that emanates from this natural setting allows guests to find a deep connection with the land and nature. Sunsets in the Sierra de Lobos paint the sky with hues ranging from oranges to reds, providing a magical backdrop for an unforgettable experience.

Fig. 91
Monoliths from their base

Fig. 92
Sierra de Lobos from viewpoint





Along your route you
will be able to observe the
Tillandsia arroyoensis
attached to the rocks of
“Los Panales”.



149 —



TURISMO LEÓN
Plaza Principal S/N
Centro Histórico
52+ 477 788 0000

• In the Sierra de Lobos area there are several viewpoints from where you can take excellent photographs.

The flesh of god

GIANTS LAND



Victoria, Guanajuato



1900 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and semiarid.



220 km NE / 3:20 hrs.
from León, Gto.

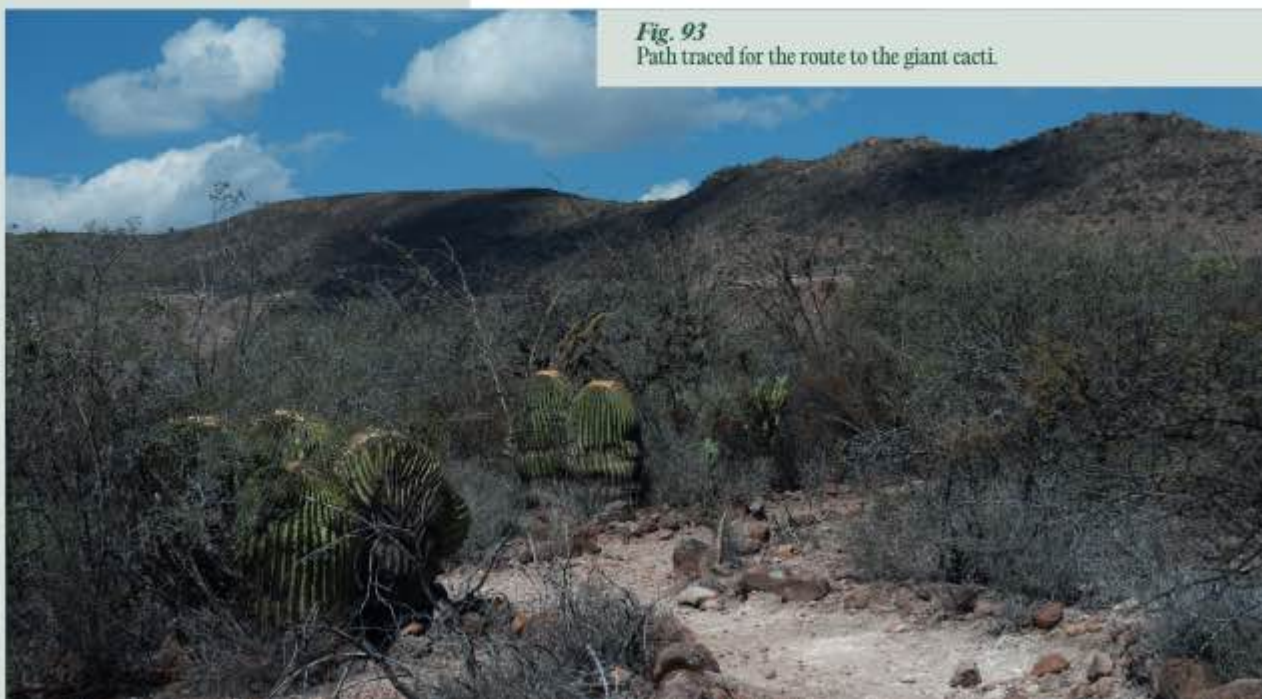


God's flesh is how the millenary Rarámuris refer to various cacti, in their cosmogony this refers to the relevance of certain species as part of their connection with the spiritual world of their culture, and this can be understood when, in the municipality of Tierra Blanca, Guanajuato and nearby places, we can observe viznagas that reach the height of an average human being.

It is also important to note that this and other types of viznagas are in extinction risk, as for instance the acitron formerly used for Christmas desserts; the country's laws prohibit their removal from the land and their sale, which emphasizes the value of these gigantic specimens.

Fig. 93

Path traced for the route to the giant cacti.



Several of these elements of the mountain landscape
with which we can placidly photograph ourselves
today were already there at the time of the Reform
War, the French invasion and the Mexican empire of
Maximilian of Habsburg.



Fig. 94
Upper part of an *Echinocactus platyacanthus*.



Although it is a short route, try to protect yourself from the sun, as there are few spots with natural shade.

Fig. 95
Cactaceae taller than 3 meters.



Fig. 96
Cactaceae family (*Echinocactus platyacanthus*) surrounding nopalaria.

To raise even more the importance of these viznagas from the north of our state, they have ritual relevance for the Chichimecas-Jonaz, an original community for whom these living beings have a fundamental role in their ritual and spiritual life.

In order to give us a better idea, some of them almost reach three meters in height and for them to developing that size it could have been a hundred and fifty year, that is to say that several of these elements of the mountain landscape with which we

can placidly photograph ourselves today were already there at the time of the Reform War, the French invasion and the Mexican empire of Maximilian of Habsburg.

Following the timeline, many of these present-day viznagas date back four hundred years, which means that they were already in the Guanajuato landscape when the Spanish viceroyalty was in consolidation and the language spoken in today's Mexico, Spanish or Castilian, was a minority language.



VICTORIA TOURISM OFFICE

Palacio Municipal S/N,
Colonia Centro
52+ 419 234 3103



- The best time to visit is at sunrise, as you will enjoy a good view of the open countryside.

Between water, soil & bats

SIERRA DE PÉNJAMO



Pénjamo, Guanajuato



2200 m above sea level.



Speleology



Temperate and Semi-humid.



123 km S / 1:45 hrs
from León, Gto.



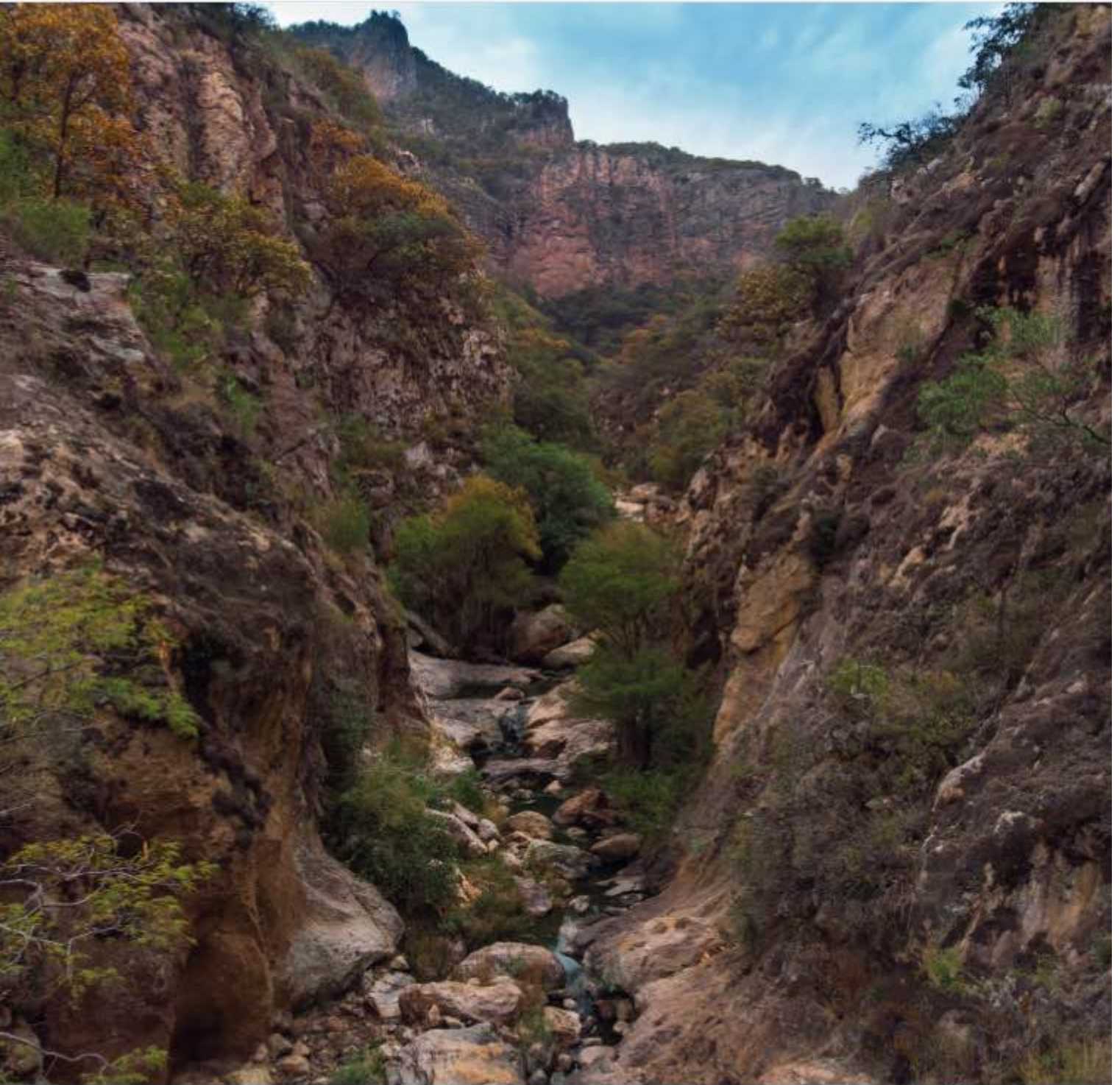
The ever ravishing Sierra of Pénjamo is a natural treasure that surprises the nature lovers with the beauty of its geographic diversity. This mountain range presents itself as an ideal setting for adventure, exploration and the enjoyment of breathtaking mountain scenery.

Trails in all directions are constantly stealing hikers' breath away, not necessarily for their intricate climbs, but for the landscape that unveils itself as you go deeper into them. One of the main access points is "La Garita", which leads to the canyon and waterfall of the same name, or the Cueva del Padre Torres on the hill of Los Remedios, where it is said that an insurgent priest was barracked during the Mexican War of Independence with a booty of gold and silver. Besides Los Remedios, there are several, many more hills, such as El Guaje, Cerro Grande, Las Barajas and many others, which form cliffs and canyons, preferred by those who dare to rappel down them.



Fig. 97

Cerro del Vigía at the entrance to the sierra of Pénjamo through Cuerámara



The easiest access to enter the Sierra is through the the Cañada de la Garita

Fig. 98
River that descends from the waterfall of "La Garita".

Opportunities for bird watching and scenic photography are abundant in this sierra. The endemic fauna and flora combine to bring a palette of colors and sounds that greatly improve the experience of those who visit. The most famous, however, are the bats that roost in the ravines and caves that form here. The Sierra de Pénjamo is so wide that it extends to two more municipalities; Cuerámaro and Ma-

nuel Doblado, each with a large share of the treasure trove of this natural treasure.

This mountainous setting is a relatively unknown place that is a perfect getaway for those seeking adventure, connection with nature and the opportunity to disconnect from the hectic pace of everyday life.

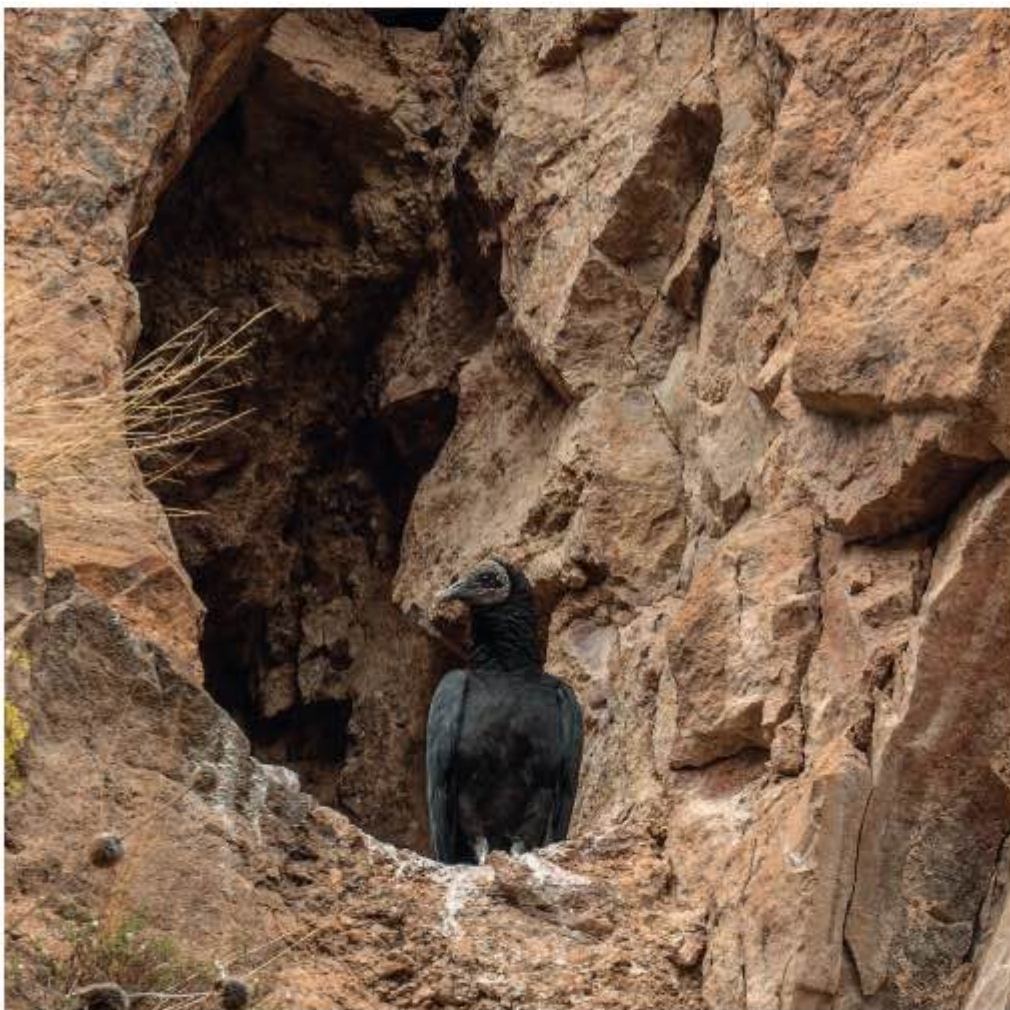


Fig. 99
Cave of Padre Torres in the canyon of "La Garita".

Fig. 100
Seeds of Ceiba Pentandra



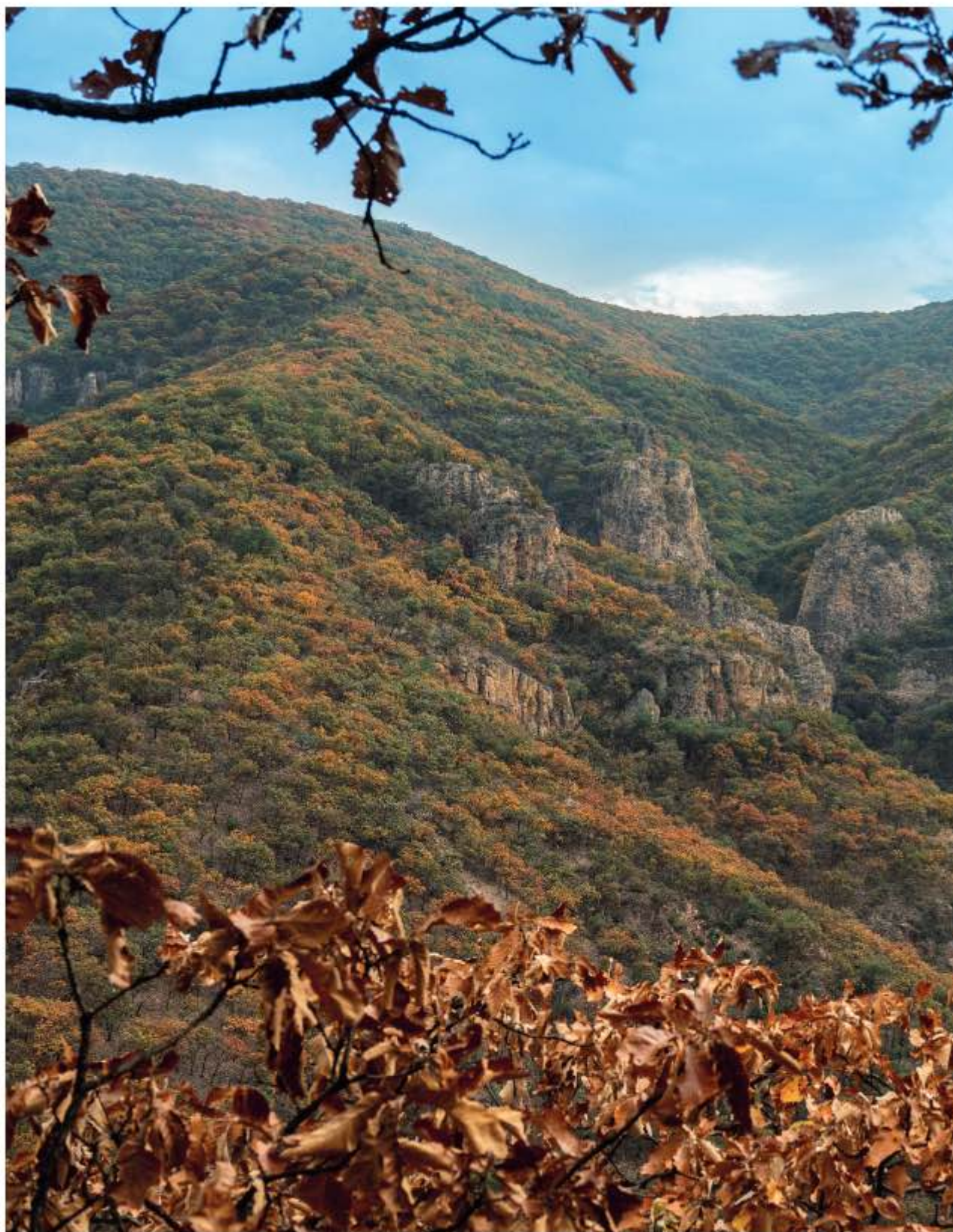
Birds of prey such as the Zopilote inhabit the Sierra of Pénjamo, hunting the bats that come out of the various caves in the canyon.



PENJAMO TOURISM OFFICE
Abasolo #43, Locales D,EyF, Zona
Centro Pénjamo, Guanajuato
52+ 469 692 1670.



- The mountain range has a great extension, choose in advance which activities you want to do.
- There are several trails that you can explore.







4.2 Challenges at high altitude

As in an immense hammock bathed by the rising sun, continues the words of Elizarraráz, the Guanajuato composer of "Tierra de mis amores", a hammock that most likely conforms the highland bodies so unique and at the same time so dissimilar according to the area being visited, that is why we present here a compilation of emblematic hills of the state that by themselves are a symbol for the people of Guanajuato.

Among the northern lands of Guanajuato, the enigmatic mountains such as Pinal del Zamorano rise like ancient titans, stony witnesses of innumerable stories woven by nature. Their heights are clothed with the imposing coniferous vegetation, green guinarlda that crowns the soul of the earth.

In other mountain sanctuaries full of greenery as in the Cerro del Sombrero in Irapuato, its roots sink their essence in the generous earth, a vegetable carpet woven with herbs and endemic flowers, the tapestry embroidered by the hands of nature. In other cases, these roots are of culture and traditions such as Cerro del Culiacán in Cortazar, site of rituals and ancient devotion, which is part of the volcanic chain of Yuriria in the middle of the Bajío Valley, allowing to be observed from a distance of a few municipalities.

The stone peaks of Capulines in Celaya, sculptures carved by the passing of time, whispering witnesses of the winds that caress their tips, keep the silent history of evolution. In their immobility, they find the permanence of existence, reminding us of the importance of protecting and preserving the integrity of these natural treasures, guardians of a vital and unique biodiversity.

And the natural treasures chosen by history, covered in curtains of water that refresh our memory with the hid-

den legends inside Cueva de Longa in the Sierra del Cubo, which still preserves traces of human presence before the Spanish conquest.

Our mountains are the echo of time's serenity, reflections of natural harmony, they are an invaluable and fragile legacy that calls upon humanity to respect the majestic beauty that surrounds us, remembering the importance of preserving its essence and guaranteeing the perpetuity of its beauty for generations to come.



«Tame grass like gentle
caresses, dancing bushes and
arboreal rooted figures, living
in communion with life, their
greenery a symbol of mother
earth's eternity.»

Tamed Sierra...

CERRO DEL ZAMORANO



Tierra Blanca,
Guanajuato



3300 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and semiarid.



250 km SE / 3.50 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Always follow the marked route
to the top of the hill



The route is long but of moderate
difficulty.



Pinal del Zamorano is a true masterpiece of biodiversity and scenic beauty that captivates nature lovers and all those seeking a quiet and rejuvenating getaway in the midst of a natural environment.

This natural reserve is located between the volcanic range that connects the states of Guanajuato and Querétaro, between the local municipalities of Tierra Blanca and San José Iturbide and the community of Zamorano, from which it takes its name, in the municipality of Colón, Querétaro.





It covers an extense land filled with an abundant variety of flora and fauna species, being part of the route of the Monarch butterfly, as well as home of the El Roble Natural Park and El Peral Ecotourism Park.

What makes Pinal del Zamorano special is its biodiversity, as it is full of a wide variety of plant species, mainly cacti, such as the thorny scrub, huajes, organoaks, oaks, pinyon pines, oyamel, among others, together with the reptiles, birds, and small mammals.

Fig. 101
Antennas at the tip of the Zamorano hill.

Fig. 102
Pinal on the slopes of the hill

SURROUNDING TRAILS





Despite the ruggedness of the area, over time the mountain range has been somewhat tamed, and you can even reach a good viewpoint by climbing the stairs that reach the antennas installed at the top of the hill.

Visitors can also enjoy a variety of activities such as hiking, horse-back riding, bird watching and, if they wish to relax, simply contemplate nature and breathe fresh air. The cool, humid climate of the cloud forest makes it a perfect refuge for those seeking to escape the city's buzz and tune into nature.

To preserve this natural wonder, Pinal del Zamorano has been designated as a protected area, which means that strict regulations are enforced to conserve its ecosystem and biodiversity. Conservation and environmental education efforts are essential to ensure that future generations will also be able to enjoy this beautiful corner of nature.

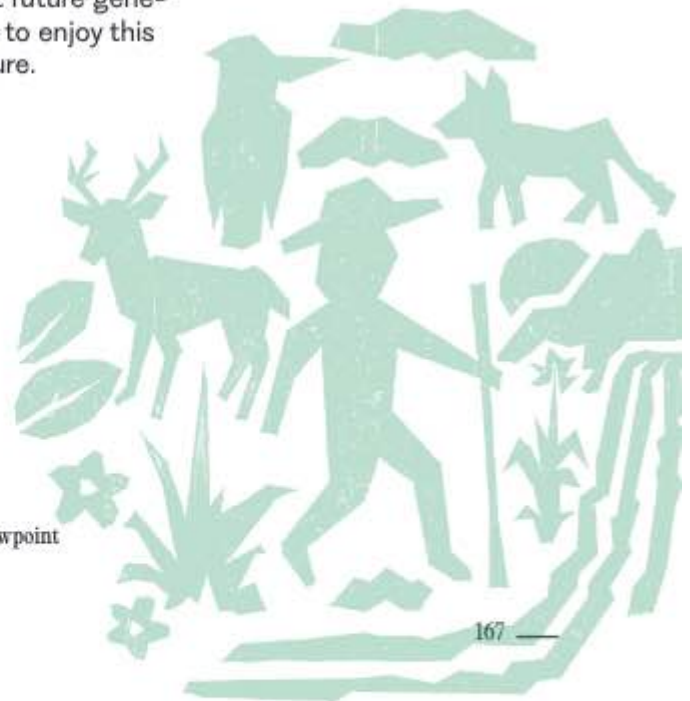


Fig. 103
Pinal del Zamorano from the viewpoint



**SAN JOSE ITURBIDE
TOURISM OFFICE**

Plaza Principal #1, Zona Centro
52+ 419 142 0003

Photos by:
Martín Alonso Gómez

Chicomostoc

CULIACÁN HILL



Cortazar, Guanajuato



2800 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and Semi-humid.



150 km SE / 2:40 hrs.
from León, Gto.



The majestic Culiacán Hill or Cerro del Culiacán, imposing and symbolic, emerges as a challenge for hiking enthusiasts in the region of Cortazar, Guanajuato. Its great height and challenging topography make it a thrilling experience for adventurers and outdoor enthusiasts looking for a sporting challenge.

Fig. 104

Yuriria Lagoon from viewpoint





Teoculhuacan Chicomóztoc, sacred place of the curved hilltop of the seven caves, as it is also known, could even hide the origins of the ancient Aztlán, since archaeological remains have been found here suggesting the presence of the seven tribes that were the inhabitants of the Valley of Mexico. It is distinguished by a volcanic form rising 1000 meters above a large plain, providing the ideal vantage point between the Bajío and the southern part of the state.

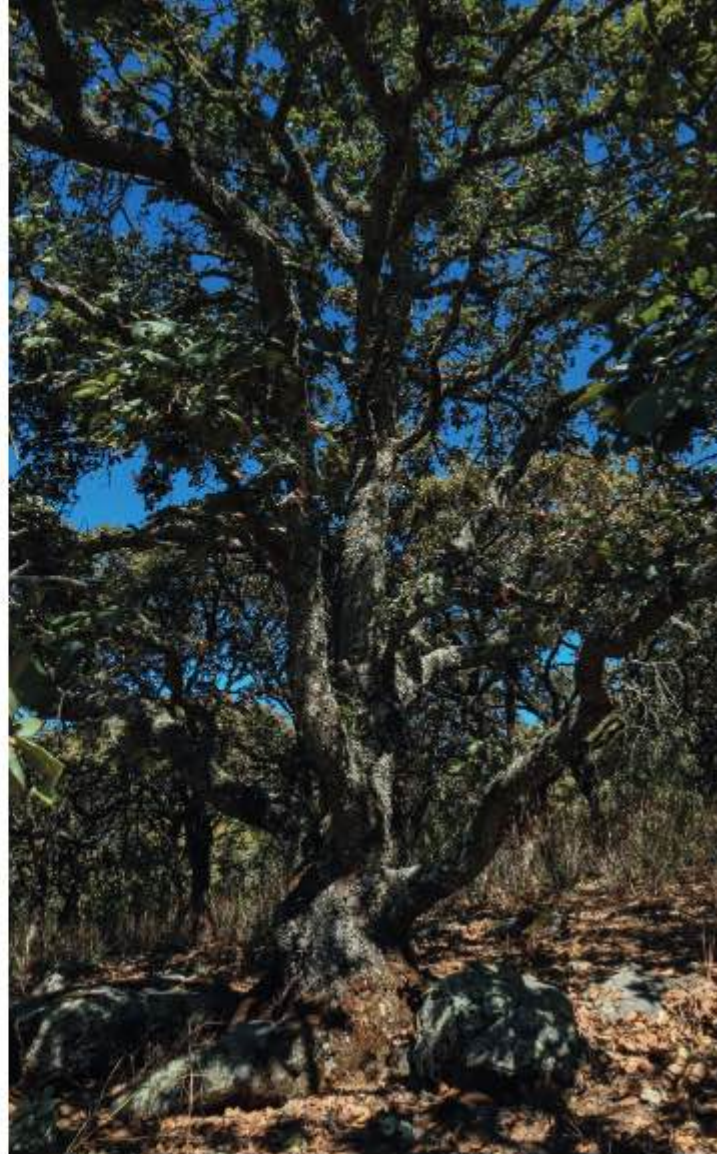


Fig. 105
Antennas on the top of El Culiacán hill.

Fig. 106
Cimarron walnut, an endemic species in danger of extinction.



There is a way to get there by car from the village of Victoria de Cortazar, which will considerably reduce the uphill drive



On the slopes of the hill, you can find the Ex Hacienda de San Isidro Culiacán

As hikers ascend the trails, they witness the diversity of flora and fauna that inhabit its slopes. Mesquite and huizache trees dot the trail, their shadows playing in the sunlight. Cactaceae species such as nopal and other scrubland plants are common in this semi-arid land. In addition, shrubs such as guayule and palo verde can be glimpsed, elements that colour the landscape with a palette of arid colors and emerald greens.

This titan can be approached from several fronts: the community of La Cañada de Caracheo, Victoria de Cortazar, Santiago Capitiro, are some of the most common places; but choose well when descending, because its slope opens almost 10 kms, so arriving on one side and descending on the other would mean having to walk about 3 hours around this giant of 1000 meters high.

Endemic birds such as mockingbirds, sparrows and zopilotes circle the skies over the hill, while small mammals such as field rabbits and tlacuaches are occasionally spotted. If you are lucky, you might spot reptiles such as rattlesnakes and lizards that blend into the desert landscape.

With its natural setting and biodiversity, the Cerro del Culiacán promises a fascinating adventure for hikers and those looking to explore nature in its most pristine condition.



Fig. 107

Cerro del Culiacán from the village of El Huizache.



Culiacán Hill could even hide the origins of the ancient Aztlán, since archaeological remains have been found here suggesting the presence of the seven tribes that were the inhabitants of the Valley of Mexico.

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**CORTAZAR TOURISM
OFFICE**

Portal Constitución # 116
Zona Centro
52+ 411 160 3800



• From Victoria de Cortazar there is a road that goes up the hill, you can take it by car as an option to avoid fatigue.

Leg workout

CAPULINES



Capulines, Celaya,
Guanajuato.



2000 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Semi-warm semi-arid



150 km SE / 2:05 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Capulines is a community that is not exactly on the roadside, but we promise it will be an experience not to be missed.

To get there, you must take the exit to San Juan de la Vega on the highway from Celaya to Comonfort, cross the La Aurora bridge and take the uphill road through Los Galvanes, where you will immediately begin noticing that greenery is gradually overtaking the landscape.

You can get there by running, biking, ATV or car because the road is in very good condition, but we especially recommend doing it during spring because you will find trees overflowing with monarch butterflies on their way





from Canada to Michoacán where their Sanctuary is located.

The monarch butterfly has found in Celaya a resting ground where they feed and reproduce. It is possible to find specimens of this butterfly all over the city, but in the case of Capulines they can bend the branches of trees with their weight.

How many butterflies are required to bend the branches of a fir tree?

There are two main routes from Los Capulines: a short one, which is done walking until you reach a first mountain from where you can partially observe this village, with a small canyon of 10 meters to do rappel; the

Fig. 108

Horse rider surrounded by garambullos observing the landscape during the ride.

Fig. 109

View of one of the stone walls of the hills that constitute the Capulines gully.



Respect the area and do not extract flora or fauna or fauna from it



Please note that the tour includes an uphill climb on rocky terrain approximately 2 hours duration.

SURROUNDING TRAILS

other one is much more intensive, a couple of hours long, which can be done better on horseback besides the fact that the high perspective allows you to better enjoy the environment, while a local guide will explain about the monarch's favorite food, the milkweed, or talk about local customs on the way to a ravine of more than 30

meters, that not only has a stunning view but that can also be descended.

Capulines is one of the region's lungs, reason why government and civil society projects are constantly being carried out to ensure that the lives of its inhabitants are made sustainable.



Fig. 110
Descent by rappel down the long rock on Cerro de la Rosa with a height of over 30 meters.

Fig. 111
Hiker returning to the village located between the hills.



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- Wear a hat, sunscreen and comfortable footwear
- It is recommended not to carry heavy backpacks

If you light a bonfire

CUEVA DE LONGA



San Felipe, Guanajuato



2200 m above sea level.



Speleology.



Temperate and semiarid.



110 km NE / 1:50 hrs.
from León, Gto.



The Cueva Longa Waterfall, hidden in the heart of the Sierra del Cubo in the picturesque municipality of San Felipe, is one of Guanajuato's best kept secrets. Adventurers and nature lovers who have visited it have been mesmerized here. This marvelous 25-meter high waterfall carries with it the spirit of exploration and excitement.

The most amazing part about this paradise is that it slips gently through the entrance of a cave, creating a magical spectacle that stretches more than ten meters wide. The fusion of the waterfall with the mouth of the cave creates a mystical and enchan-





By lighting a bonfire, you will be surrounded by the four elements, on two sides the water of the fall and the thin air of the hollow, in front the blazing fire and below the solid rock that holds up the roof of the cave.

Fig. 113
Gully that forms the Cueva de Longa

Fig. 114
View of the village of Palomas del Cubo





Fig. 115
Path leading to the interior of the cave.

Fig. 116
View from inside the Cueva de Longa (Longa Cave)



ting atmosphere that invites you to get into the adventure.

Just by visiting it and by lighting a bonfire, you will be surrounded by the four elements, on two sides the water of the fall and the thin air of the hollow, in front the blazing fire and below the solid rock that holds up the roof of the cave.

In spite of its spectacular nature, it is a relatively unknown place. From the village of Palomas del Cubo it takes a few minutes, so you can go by yourself or find a local guide, it's up to you, but you would miss out on some great legends and tales about the treasures hidden in this natural refuge. If there is not too much water it is possible to enter the cave, which has enough space to fit several huts, with your private waterfall inside the cave.

The waterfall environment creates a perfect setting for ecotourism and the practice of extreme sports. Nature lovers will find their paradise here, full of options to explore the unspoiled beauty of this region.

The Cueva Longa Waterfall is a hidden gem that promises exciting discoveries and a communion with nature. For those seeking adventure and an escape from routine, this place is a treasure to explore.



The tour has an approximate duration of 4 hours. Stay hydrated.



TURISMO SAN FELIPE

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Photographs by:
Eco-Aventura Capulines





4.3 Vestiges among the rocks

Historical remnants have a strange way of standing mute and seeming to be shouting words at the same time: their scarred walls suggest they have received blows from axes and arrowheads, although on many occasions this has been the case, most of them are nothing more than the all-consuming crawls of time that take everything into the impregnable realm of oblivion.

Hence it is worth visiting these ruins, as a way to rescue our common heritage from oblivion, to learn about its history and preserve the memories of the people who once made it their home.

El Cópore, witness of an ancient splendor, recounts the greatness of ancestral cultures that weaved stories on the slopes of the Sierra de Santa Bárbara. In Cañada de la Virgen, there are pyramids that defy the skies, symbols of architectural mastery and astronomical observatories that reveal secrets of the pre-Hispanic cosmovision.

Arroyo Seco, immersed in the stillness of nature, is also home to the vestiges of ancient cultures that tilled the earth and raised centuries-old monuments

in honor of their gods. Peralta, with its serene silence, keeps the memories of settlements that worked the land. There, between the whispering vegetation, reverberates the mythical presence of civilizations who danced to the rhythm of the natural cycles.

In Plazuelas, the grandeur of its architectural style hints of the Chichimecs, a warrior tribe whose resilient spirit defied the test of time.

It is crucial, today and in the time to come, to protect these priceless heritage. They are living testimonies that connect the rich present with the ancient days, encouraging future generations to trace their roots and understand the diversity of human history.



«Who are the heritage of a fine race
Of whose magnificent and bizarre art,
Offer archaeological samples,
The curve of their clay amphorae
And the stone lace of their temples.»

-Luis G. Urbina

Ancestors are speaking

ARROYO SECO



The cosmovision and identity of the pre-Hispanic cultures of northeastern Guanajuato can be appreciated in the various cave paintings that are exhibited in the archaeological zone of Arroyo Seco.

This unique art gallery of our ancient cultures, located in the municipality of Victoria, Guanajuato,



Archaeological Site
Arroyo Seco, Victoria, Guanajuato.



1800 m above sea level.



Hiking.



Temperate and semiarid



205 km NE / 3:20 hrs.
from León, Gto.

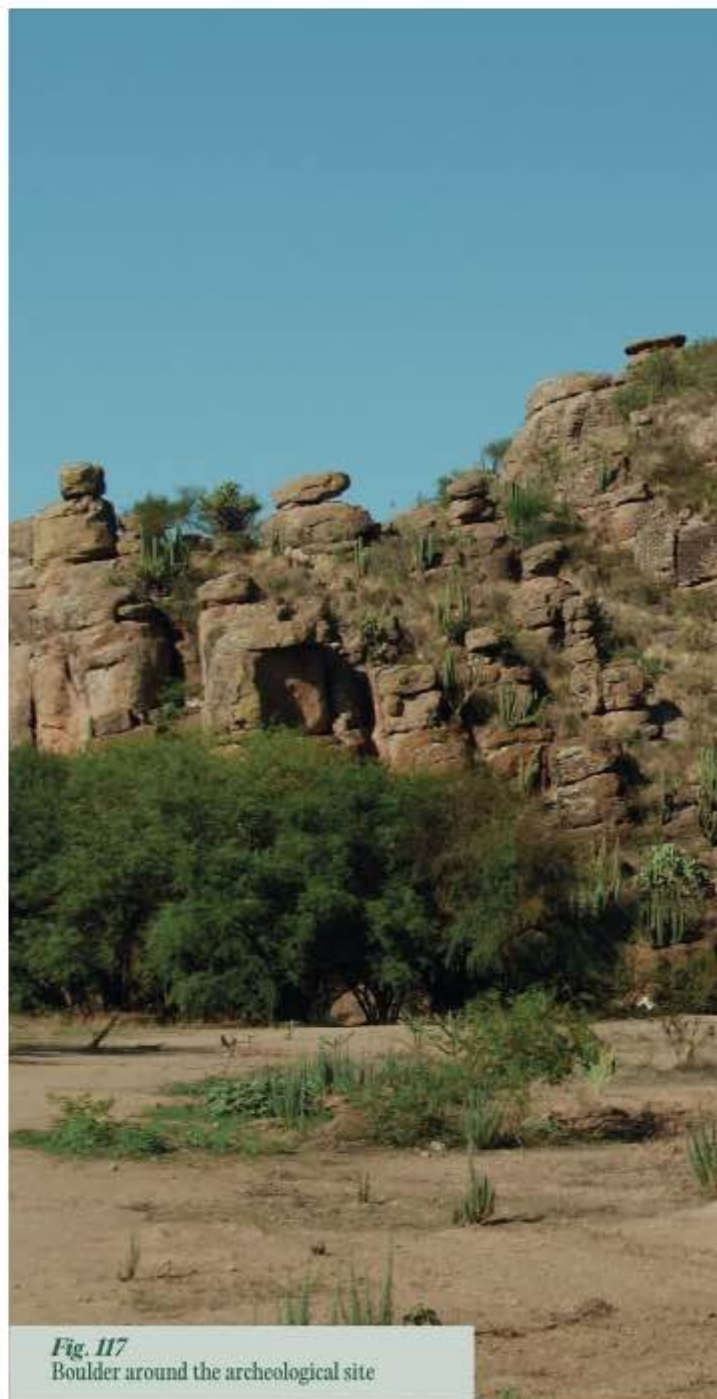


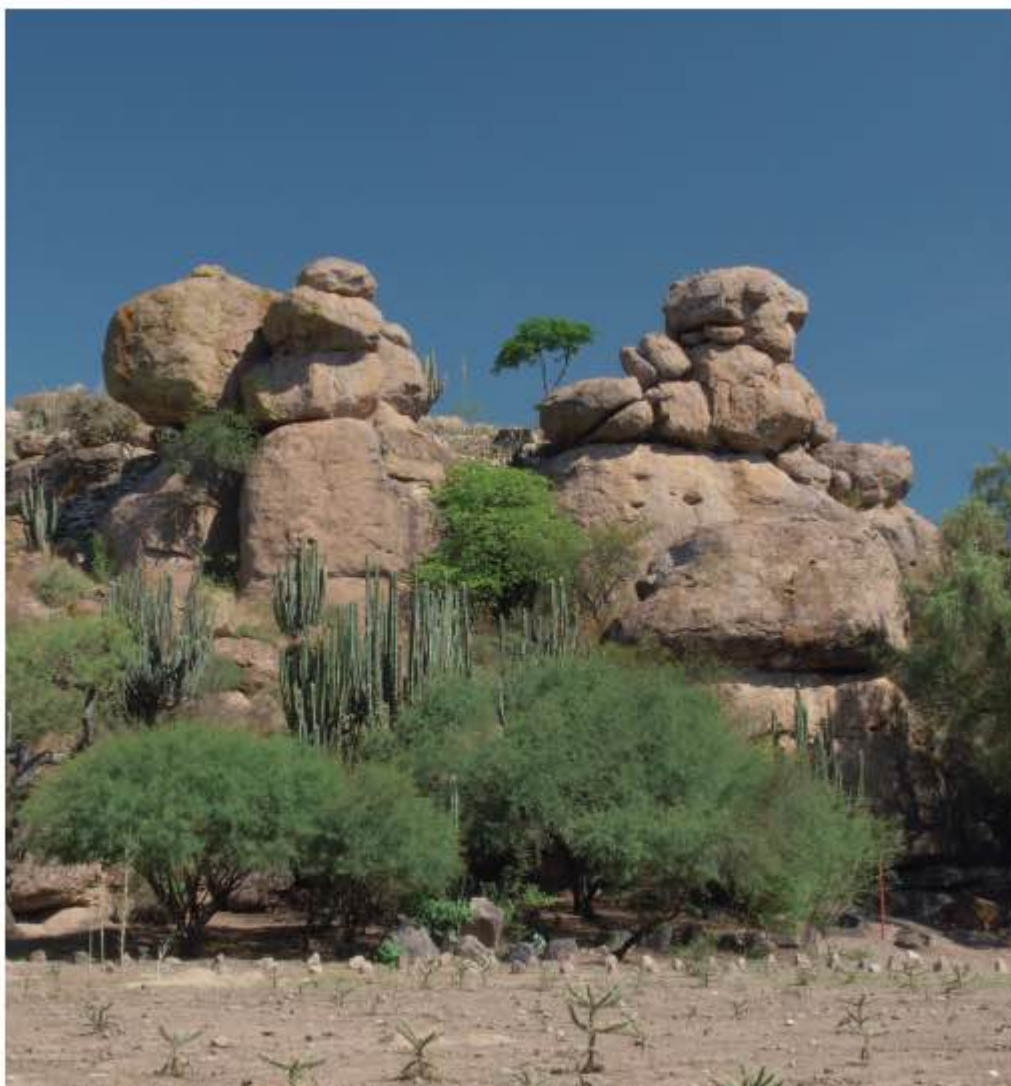
Fig. II7
Boulder around the archeological site



between the towns of Los Remedios and Cerro Grande, shows a series of pictorial designs in a wide range of reddish, yellow and black tones that let us imagine the daily life of their times.

The artwork shows the human figure in close relationship with their rituals and identity, so it is not shown in a random way but in specific places and positions of great significance for the indigenous people with reference to the sun, the moon, the earth and their connection with relevant sacred and mythical events, so it can be considered a site of divine connotations.

The plains, hills and rock columns that make up this archaeological site are of outstanding scenic and heritage value, as it is considered one of the most important centers of rock art in Mexico.





Likewise, it shows pre-Hispanic man carrying out daily activities such as hunting or agricultural activities, as well as some animal representations and other anthropomorphic figures.

The plains, hills and rock columns that constitute this archaeological zone are of great landscape and patrimonial value, being considered one of the most important concentrations of ancient paintings in Mexico.

The site has 46 sites with pictorial motifs, many of which can be appreciated through exhibition halls and large windows that allow their conservation but also visitors to admire and interact with them.

Fig. 118
Archeological remains on rock formation.

Fig. 119
Megalith at the top of the crag



The route is long and steep, so always stay hydrated and protect yourself from the sun.



Respect the paintings, do not spoil them.



**SAN FELIPE TOURISM
OFFICE**

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Photographs by:
*Jorge Castellanos
y Crissanto Frías*

Such was the Chichimeca greatness

PLAZUELAS



Zona Arquelógica de Plazuelas
San Juan el Alto Plazuelas,
Pénjamo, Guanajuato



1850 m above sea level.



Pre-Hispanic Ceremonial sites.



Temperate and Semi-humid.



123 km SE / 1:45 hrs.
from León, Gto.



The archaeological zone of Plazuelas, located in the state of Guanajuato, is a historical treasure that takes us back to a millenary era. This site, of an amazing cultural richness, represents an important vestige of the pre-Hispanic Chichimeca civilization in Mexico.

Plazuelas opens a window to the distant past, revealing the remains of an ancient city dating back to pre-Columbian cultures. The remains, including pyramids, ceremonial foundations, juegos de pelota and habitation structures, are silent witnesses to the flourishing of urban life in this area centuries ago.





Fig. 121
Pyramidal bases that are part of the architectural complex.

Fig. 122
Stone model of the site found in the archaeological zone

Fig. 123
Reverse of pyramidal base



The architectural layout displays an impressive ability to build and design complex structures. The details of the pyramids emphasize advanced planning and organization in the distribution of available space. In addition, the presence of the "little faces", representations of human faces sculpted into walls around the area, add a mysterious and enigmatic character to this historic site.



Respect at all times the signs inside the archaeological site



Do not remove stones or pieces from the area

The natural environment surrounding the archaeological zone brings extra beauty to this cultural experience. The open landscapes and surrounding hills offer a special atmosphere that enhances the sensation of immersing oneself in history.

Overall, the Plazuelas archaeological site is a true statement of the cultural and architectural grandeur of the pre-Hispanic civilizations. A highly recommended destination for those seeking to explore and understand Mexico's ancient history.



Fig. 124
Vestiges of a Juego de Pelota (Ballgame)

It would seem that the ancient Chichimecs who shaped Plazuelas wanted to replicate the landscape of hills and the plain at their feet, reflecting them in the pyramidal bases and the extensive polygons that form this architectural complex.



A lookout to preserve

CERRO DEL SOMBRERO



Irapuato, Guanajuato



1980 m above sea level.



Canoeing.



Temperate and Semi-humid.



60 km SE / 1:10 hrs.
from León, Gto.



Full of history and mystery, Cerro del Sombrero in Irapuato is an archaeological treasure that will surely delight the imagination of its visitors. This site, full of legends and archaeological remains, offers a glimpse into an ancient past.

Its archaeological ruins are vestiges of an enigmatic civilization that once inhabited this region. It is uncertain which culture, but it is believed to have been part of the Chichimeca region. As you ascend the trails, the atmosphere is permeated with a sense of wonder and curiosity. The archaeological remains, among which are pre-Columbian remains in the form of petroglyphs, provide a rare insight into the culture and way of life of those who populated the area.



Respect the petroglyphs, do not harm or damage them.



Remember to use sunscreen during the tour.



Its archaeological ruins are vestiges of an enigmatic civilization that once inhabited this region. It is uncertain which culture, but it is believed to have been part of the Chichimeca region.



Fig. 125

Petroengravings in the form of small pools (hollows) that fill with water as the level of the dam rises.

Fig. 126

La Purisima dam from the Cerro del Sombrero

In addition to its archeological attraction, Cerro del Sombrero offers an enjoyable experience for hikers. La Purisima dam is located at the foot of the hill, and can be visited at different points, with recreational and sporting activities, as described in the first chapter of this book.

It is a place that inspires those who seek to explore history, immerse themselves in nature and, at the same time, enjoy exploration and discovery. The mystique of this archaeological site is a constant reminder of the le-

gacy of past civilizations in the region, bringing renewed interest in the history and the archaeology of the area.

Cerro del Sombrero in Irapuato not only presents a glimpse into the ancient history of the surrounding region, but also a time for reflection and admiration of the natural beauty that is also a sacred place, as deforestation is constantly threatening it.



Fig. 127
Vegetation on Cerro del Sombrero

Fig. 128
Sgraffito petroglyphs with volute shapes,
symbolizing water.



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Photos by:
*Jorge Castellanos
y Crissanto Frías*

The great road

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE EL COPORO



San José del Torreón,
Ocampo



1800 m above sea level.



Pre-Hispanic Ceremonial sites.



Temperate and semiarid.



67 kms NE / 1:20 hrs
from León, Gto.



The pre-Hispanic settlement of El Cópore, established between 500 and 900 A.D., is located in the western foothills of the Santa Bárbara mountain range, near the community of San José del Torreón, in the present municipality of Ocampo, northeast of the state of Guanajuato. This important archaeological site is composed of diverse architectural elements that, together with ceramic objects and stone tools, suggest a connection with the Tunal Grande region in San Luis Potosí and a close relationship with pre-Hispanic settlements in Zacatecas, Jalisco and the Bajío region of Guanajuato.



Fig. 130
Altar in the Conjunto Gotas

Within the area called “Tunal Grande”, El Cópore is the only archaeological site that is open to the public and has been preserved because its architecture was well adapted to the surrounding canyons.



Fig. 131
Trail to Conjunto Caracol

The word "Cóporo", of Tarascan origin, translates as "on the great road" or "the great road". This settlement is crucial because it was developed approximately between 1,800 and 1,100 years ago, specifically between 200 and 900 A.D., which gives it a high historical and cultural value.

This archaeological site is an important testimony of the life and customs of ancient civilizations. Its location on the ancient northern border of Mesoamerica gives it a significant role in pre-Hispanic history, showing a remarkable adaptation to the geographical environment, with its variety of natural resources and its relationship with pre-Hispanic settlements in other regions.



Respect the archaeological remains and contribute to their conservation.



Wear comfortable shoes suitable for hiking.

Fig. 132

Sierra de Santa Bárbara from the archaeological zone

Fig. 133

El Cóporo settlement





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Photos by:
Juan Manuel Sánchez Rojas
y *Secretaría de Turismo*

The house of Xipe Tótec

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
CAÑADA DE LA VIRGEN



San Miguel de Allende



2000 m above sea level.



Pre-Hispanic Ceremonial sites.



Temperate Subhumid.



120 kms SE / 1:55 hrs.
from León, Gto.



In the ancestral lands of San Miguel de Allende, lies the mysterious and evocative archaeological site of Cañada de la Virgen. These pre-Hispanic ruins stand as a living testimony to the rich history of the region, a place where antiquity intertwines with the majesty of Xipe Tótec, the mortuary deity venerated by pre-Columbian cultures.

Fig. 134

Nopalera on the side of the Red Temple

Fig. 135

Rear view of the Red Temple





The journey through Cañada de la Virgen is a voyage across time, where every structure and every stone relief tells the story of a glorious past. The archaeological remains reveal careful astronomical and architectural planning, reflecting the complexity of the civilization that once inhabited this sacred place.



Enjoy the museum inside the archaeological zone.



Respect the signs, don't climb up to the restricted zones





Fig. 136
Stairway of the Red Temple

Xipe Totec as a concept, a god of renewal, is a central figure in the cosmovision of many Mesoamerican cultures. In Cañada de la Virgen, references to this deity are manifested through the reliefs and sculptural representations found in the structures. The inscriptions and images offer a window into the veneration of this divinity, showing the importance of rituals and ceremonies linked to the cycle of life and nature.

Fig. 137
Front view of the Red Temple

A visit to Cañada de la Virgen is an opportunity to connect with the roots of Mexican history and appreciate the wisdom and sophistication of pre-Hispanic cultures, a reminder of the greatness and complexity of these civilizations, as well as a tribute to the reverence for nature and the vital cycles that were fundamental to their cosmovision.



**TURISMO SAN MIGUEL
DE ALLENDE**

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Photos by:
Juan Manuel Sánchez Rojas
y *Secretaría de Turismo*

Echoes of the early classic

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF PERALTA



Abasolo



2600 m above sea level.



Pre-Hispanic Ceremonial sites:



Temperate Subhumid.



105 km SE / 1:30 hrs.
from León, Gto.



The archaeological site of Peralta is a major landmark in the Bajío region. During the early classic period, it was a significant ceremonial center for several pre-Hispanic civilizations that have not been clearly identified, however it was occupied for some time by groups of the so-called "Chichimecas", which was how the conquerors iden-





Fig. 138
Visitors in the Archaeological Site of Peralta

Fig. 139
Architectural complex of "El Divisadero".

Fig. 140
View of the archaeological site from "La Mesita".



tified different semi-nomadic hunter ethnicities. This place has architectural remains that suggest its relevance in rituals and settlements of yesteryear. In addition, there are petroglyphs, stelae and sculptures, which are indicative of the cultural richness of the inhabitants of this zone in past times.



Near the archaeological site you can hike the Peralta hill.



The circular structure of "La Mesita" is unique in the archaeological zones of the Bajío.

The ruins of the archaeological site located in the municipality of Abasolo include pyramids, plazas and other architectural complexes. These vestiges, together with some others that have not been recovered, are one of the largest archeological sites in Guanajuato. The site museum exhibits artifacts, ceramics, tools and other objects discovered in the archaeological site. These findings offer a more detailed view of the daily life, religious traditions and culture of the pre-Hispanic civilizations that settled in this region. To explore Peralta and its museum is to delve into the history and cultural legacy of these ancient civilizations of the Bajío which, by the way, most of them remain in the unknown, almost everything is mysterious about them, their origin, the reasons for their displacements, their cosmogonies for the most part, awaiting the light of history.



Fig. 141
Architectural complex of "El divisadero".



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Surrounding Trails

AN INSIGHT TO GUANAJUATO'S
ROAD-TRIPPING



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