The Best Colonial Neighbourhoods for You

Analyzing Mexico City’s colonial neighbourhoods

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Mexico City and its Streets

The project:
Mexico City was one of the most prominent urban centres during Latin America’s colonial period. Today, it is the city that has the most monuments in the world, and it hosts numerous annual festivals, such as the International Film Festival, the Book Festival, the Contemporary Art Festival, and the Cultures Festival. However, its size might result in intimidating some potential tourists. To avoid this, the project determines the best and most convenient neighbourhoods to stay in while touring in Mexico City. How convenient a neighbourhood will depend on where it is located, how connected it is to other neighbourhoods, and how accessible it is to main facilities and places of interest.

The kind of tourist this project is made for is one that is interested in the colonial history and architecture of Mexico. This tourist loves walking, enjoys colonial architecture, visiting hundreds of bars, art galleries, eating traditional Mexican food at local restaurants, and in general, having a more traditional, true experience of Mexico. This tourist prefers to get to know Mexico City very well, as opposed to travelling to a different city every day without really seeing much.

The locations that fit this criterion are mostly likely North American and European tourists, who do not have a big time constraint, but also a somewhat limited budget. Therefore, priority is given to public transport, a neighborhood’s location, and how accessible and connected it is to major places of interest in a more time-saving manner.

Finally, this project benefits both, Mexico City’s tourism industry, and the tourists who would like to visit Mexico City but fear it is too intimidating and confusing due to its size.

La Condesa
La Condesa was established in 1902. Its architecture is heavily influenced by Art Deco and Art Nouveau giving the neighbourhood a very European flavour. Today, it is considered one of the most fashionable neighborhoods in the city for its many museums, galleries, restaurants, and parks. La Condesa is not only ideal for the high quality of living tourist will find in it, but also for its public transport and its easy access to places of interest in the city.

Centro Historico
The Centro Historico is the historic heart of Mexico City. It is the heart of the downtown area and includes the important historical sites such as the National Palace, the Metropolitan Cathedral, and the National Museum of Anthropology. This neighborhood is the best place to experience the city’s history and culture.

TulaPam
TulaPam is a pre-Hispanic village that remained a farming village, famous for its fruit orchards during the colonial period. Today, TulaPam preserves many of its old haciendas and is frequented by middle-class Mexicans who live in the area and like to enjoy its calm and artistic cafes and bars. Although TulaPam is a gem rarely visited by tourists, it is not accessible by metro and the travel time by metrobus is very long.

Attractions in Mexico City include museums, theatres, monuments, and cathedrals, as well as bars, cafes, and restaurants. The map positions these attractions within Mexico City and relates to the four colonial neighborhoods in this analysis. Areas of high density attractions outside the four analyzed neighborhoods are Imágenes de Mexico, one of the most vibrant streets for its bars and restaurants, C.U.I., the largest university in Latin America, and Reforma Avenue, in the edge of La Condesa, where the Angel of Independence and the Red Light District are. As will be seen, these attractions will be accessible by the means of public transport.

Metro & Metrobus
The Metro first opened in 1960 and comprises eleven lines, 163 stations, and 450 kilometers. It costs the equivalent of 30.25 cents and runs from 6:30am to midnight. The Metrobus started running in 2005 and has 5 lines, Imágenes Line, the line used in this analysis, from 30 kilometers long and has 40 stations. It connects the north of Mexico City. The Metrobus costs an equivalent of 30.40 cents, and also runs from 7am to midnight. Metro and Metrobus stations for each neighborhood.

Network Analysis
The Network Analysis was done for selected metro stations and metrobus stops that correspond to each of the neighborhoods as well as to attractions outside the downtown. The metro and the metrobus were analyzed separately.

The following chart presents the maximum maximums and mean travel times for the metro stations and metrobus stops in each neighborhood. Time is given in minutes.