



## On the (Not So Obvious) Frida and Diego Trail

A few bonus spots for those who think they've seen it all

By Megan Frye

Diego Rivera's Socialist Mural in the Palacio Nacional. Photo by [Jay Galvin](#) via Flickr

Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: the iconic pair whose presence is still very much felt along our city's streets. Of course you've spent an afternoon already at Frida's beloved [La Casa Azul](#), you've wandered Diego's collection of artifacts at [Anahuacalli](#). You've seen his murals at [Palacio de Bellas Artes](#), adorning the facade of [Teatro Insurgentes](#) and within the [Museo Mural Diego Rivera](#). You've checked out the separate but nearby studios that they kept at the [Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo](#). But when it comes to a couple who was as on fire as Diego and Frida, there's always more to learn and discover. Here's how to really geek out and get an authentic taste of Diego and Frida's Mexico City.

---

### La Esmeralda



via [Facebook](#)

Kahlo briefly taught at [La Esmeralda](#) in 1943, an experimental art school that was new at the time. Though she proved an inspiration to her students, recurring health problems forced her to lead classes in her home instead.

*Centro Nacional de las Artes, Avenida Río Churubusco 79, Colonia Country Club, Coyoacán*

## Parque Frida Kahlo

Inaugurated in 1984, [this park](#) is in a tranquil setting near downtown Coyoacán, and just steps from the Capilla la Conchita, a church erected over an Aztec altar in 1525 by Hernan Cortés. The park features a life-size bronze statue of Kahlo (by sculptor Gabriel Ponzanelli) seated atop a pyramid, as well as a large fountain with a bronze statue of a nude woman, huddled and bracing her legs.

*Fernández Leal & Av. Pacífico, Barrio de la Conchita, Coyoacán*

## Museo Casa de Leon Trotsky

Frida and Diego worked together on numerous occasions to invite artists and political asylum seekers to Mexico City, which was considered a safe haven for socialist and communist-leaning leaders in the days of the Red Scare. Leon Trotsky, who arrived in Mexico in 1936 with his wife, Natalia Sedova, was among the most prominent of their guests. The couple lived at La Casa Azul until an alleged affair between Frida and Leon led the other couple to find their own home just blocks away. It was in [this location](#) that Leon Trotsky was assassinated in 1940 on orders of Joseph Stalin.

*Rio Churubusco 410, Del Carmen, Coyoacán*

## Parque Ecológico de Xochimilco



Photo by [Omar Eduardo](#) via Flickr

Much of present-day Mexico City was a large, salty lake in the days of the Aztec empire, whose citizens created vast systems of irrigation canals. The only ones still in existence are at the city's southern edge in the borough known as Xochimilco. Wander [here](#) among the swamps, where you can even take a ride on a boat called a trajinera, a favorite activity of Frida Kahlo's and one she and Diego loved to share with out-of-town guests.

*Periférico Oriente #1, Col. Ciénega Grande, Xochimilco*

## Secretaría de Educación Pública

The first of Diego's large-scale mural projects was completed between 1923 and 1928 and can be found within the halls of [this former convent-turned-government-building](#).

*Calle República de Argentina 28, Centro Histórico, Cuauhtémoc*

## Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso

Diego was working on a mural at this [prestigious preparatory school](#) when he and Frida met. She was 16 and quickly became enamored with the already locally famous painter 20 years her senior. Today the college, which is located in the lovely historic center, is a museum where you can tour Diego's murals as well as the halls of this 458-year-old complex.

*Justo Sierra 16, Centro Histórico, Cuauhtémoc*

## Museo Dolores Olmedo



The Canoe Enflorada, 1931. Diego Rivera. Oil / canvas via [Website](#)

This [grand hacienda home](#) belonged to art collector Dolores Olmedo and is located in the La Noria section of Xochimilco. When you walk into the walled gardens you feel like you're in a different Mexico City, one full of jungle-like vegetation, strutting peacocks and rambunctious xoloscuintles (a hairless dog native to Mexico). Within the walls of this estate is a tremendous collection of Mexican art, including a remarkable number of

Diego's sketches and smaller-scale paintings, as well as a small room dedicated to Frida's work.

*Avenida México 5843, La Noria, Xochimilco*

## Museo del Cárcamo de Dolores

Within the vast, inner-city forest park of Chapultepec is a museum that once served as an aquifer for the city. Diego was commissioned to paint a mural (along with his students) that would be visible below the pool of crystalline water. While the site is no longer a working aquifer, this building continues to draw art lovers from around the world for the mural and the architecture.

*Avenida Neri Vela, Bosque de Chapultepec Section II, Miguel Hidalgo*

## Colegio Alemán Elementary School

Frida, the daughter of a Mexican mother and German immigrant father, spent her early years attending this German private school. With three campuses, it's one of the most prestigious early education centers in the metropolis.

*Superavenida Lomas Verdes 520, Alteña II, Naucalpan de Juárez*

## Abelardo L. Rodriguez Market

This historic public marketplace is just a skip from the Zocalo and features roughly 1,450 square meters of murals, all of which were created by Diego's students under his supervision. Starting in 2009, a major restoration was undertaken on the murals, which deal with themes such as fascism and worker rights, in order to repair damage caused by earthquakes and vandalism.

*Callejón Giron, Centro Histórico, Cuauhtémoc*

## Panteón de Dolores



Tomb of Diego Rivera. Photo by [Razi Machay](#) via Flickr

Reportedly the largest cemetery in all of Mexico, the [Panteón de Dolores](#) is located within Chapultepec Park and covers about 590 acres. The remains of many famous Mexican politicians and cultural figures, including Diego, are interred within the 700,000-plus tombs. We couldn't *not* include this location: It wouldn't be Mexico without a bit of celebration of death, would it?

*Avenida Constituyentes, bet. Sections II & III of Bosque de Chapultepec, Miguel Hidalgo*

## Museo de Arte Moderno (MAM)

Mexico's [Museum of Modern Art](#) offers an exquisite display of works by Mexican and international artists, including pieces by both Frida and Diego.

*Paseo de la Reforma & Calz. Mahatma Gandhi, Bosque de Chapultepec, Miguel Hidalgo*

## Cabinas Amberes 12

We're not really sending you to a sex shop, but yes, [this](#) is a sex shop. However, before you could buy all manner of durable plastic goods here and spend quality "alone time" in the wooden "cabinas," it was home to the Galeria de Arte Contemporaneo, whose founder was Mexican photographer Lola Alvarez Bravo, a dear friend of Frida's. It was within the Gallery of Contemporary Art that Frida hosted her first solo exhibition in her home country in 1953. The exhibition would also be her last before her death in 1954.

*Amberes 12, Colonia Juaréz, Cuauhtemoc*



By Megan Frye

Megan Frye is a professional vagabond who swears she's danced with the dead at the pyramids. She can usually be found eating her way around Mexico City. Tweet her about the food that makes you squeal at [@fryechild](#), or see what she's up to on Instagram at [@gypsy\\_fire](#).



OKAY, WHAT'S NEXT?



LIMA

Street Food Rocks



MORE IN MEXICO CITY



MEXICO CITY / CULTURE

Marvin's Music

MORE IN CULTURE



ISTANBUL / CULTURE

4 Unusual Museums to Visit This May in Istanbul





Get the inside scoop in your inbox.

*Sign up with your email*

**GO!**