

San Miguel de Allende is a small colonial town, of perhaps 140,000 people, in the Bajio mountains of central Mexico, about 170 miles northwest of Mexico City. Founded as "San Miguel" in 1542 by a San Franciscan Monk named San Miguel El Grande, it became a centerpiece in the war for Mexican independence from Spain.

The town was declared a national monument in 1926 and buildings became heavily restricted in the town's historic centro district, allowing the city to keep the colorful native facades that have become the backdrop of many famous works of art and even modern motion pictures.

In July of 2008 it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It's a tourist destination, an art colony and a retirement community for a few thousand foreigners, mostly Americans, Canadians, and Europeans. In spite of the increased number of foreigners over the past perhaps 20 years, it still is charming enough that many Mexicans visit for special holidays, and there are more than a few visitors who buy a house within a few days of their first arrival!

It is an eclectic mix of Old World Mexican charm & laid back American hospitality; a world-class destination for adventurous travelers.

~excerpt **Wikitravel**

