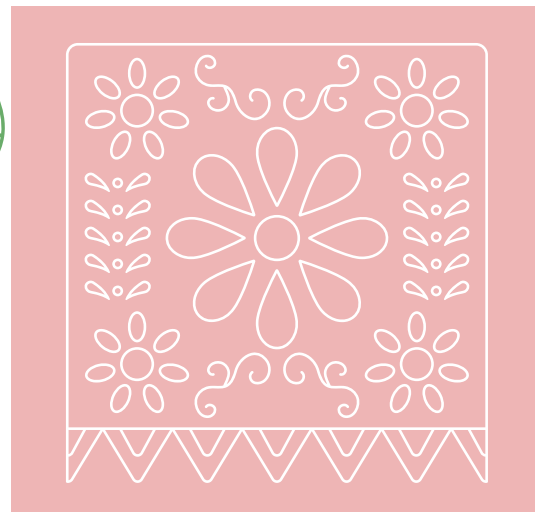


MEXICO CULTURE FACTS

- Mexican culture is the fusion of European, African, and Indigenous cultures. Today, Mexican culture is a product of centuries of mixing between Indigenous, African, and Spanish populations during the Colonial period. The mixing, known commonly as *mestizaje*, produced a unique cultural identity that makes up the basis for modern-day Mexico. This is prevalent in every aspect of Mexican life, which includes food, clothing, art, music, and even language.
- Mexican Independence Day is not Cinco de Mayo. Mexican Independence Day is celebrated on September 16th. Celebrations begin on the eve of the holiday with the *Grito*, a ceremony commemorating the Shout of Dolores in 1810 which gave way to the War of Independence. This is followed by fireworks, music and dancing. The next day, parades take place in most major cities. Popular foods include Pozole, a hearty corn soup, and Chiles en Nogada, which is stuffed chillis drenched in a nut-based sauce and topped with pomegranate.
- Mexico has a successful and highly influential film industry. Since the dawn of the film industry, there have been Mexican filmmakers creating and innovating in the medium. Post-Revolutionary stability and the advent of sound in films ushered in a golden age for Mexican cinema. By the 1940s, Mexico became the largest exporter of Spanish language films in the world. More recently, Mexican film continues to show success around the world, giving rise to award-winning talents such as Guillermo Del Toro, Alfonso Cuarón, and Alejandro González Iñárritu.
- Mexican cuisine is among the best in the world. Mexican cuisine is renowned worldwide for its rich flavors, wide variety, and fresh ingredients. It varies heavily from region to region, but common ingredients include avocado, maize, beans, tomato, squash, and chilli, all of which formed the basis of the Pre-Columbian diet. Maize is the staple food and is prepared in a myriad of ways, from soft corn tortillas to dumpling-like tamales, to sweet beverages like *atole con champurrado*. Vegetables and chilli are used to prepare a variety of rich, spicy sauces that flavor the food.



MEXICO CULTURE FACTS

- Mexico has its own unique holiday. The Day of the Dead is both a commemoration of death and a celebration of life, and happens on November 1st and 2nd. Colorful shrines honoring the deceased, known as ofrendas, are placed in homes, offices, churches, schools, and squares in the weeks prior to the holiday and graveyards light up with candles and music. Parades and street parties take place featuring dancers, puppets, and theater troupes in bright skull make-up.
- Beautiful architecture can be seen across Mexico. Mexican architecture is stunning, diverse, and full of history. Walk around Mexican cities and you will see the ruins of ancient pyramids, baroque Churches, sleek skyscrapers, art deco homes, and gorgeous modern structures built by an array of talented and often world-renowned Mexican architects.
- Humor is central in Mexican culture. Mexicans are easy going people who love laughter and find time to smile even in difficult times. This humor tends to be sharply satirical, and often dark, full of clever double entendres, known in Mexico as as alburas. Alburas come from using words with similar sounds to create alternatives to traditional expressions.
- Music is a big part of Mexican culture. Traditional styles of folk music vary heavily by region, but some of the most popular styles include Mariachi, Son, Norteño, and Ranchero. These styles have become emblematic, and their most popular songs are beloved by millions who know the lyrics by heart. Mexican artist have offered their twist on various genres from around the world which includes rock, ska, hip-hop, reggae, cumbia, and salsa.
- Mexico is famous for their ornate murals. One of the most iconic art movements in Mexico was the Mexican Muralist movement of the 1920s and 1930s. As the country sought to forge a new national identity after the revolution, many groups of artists created large scale paintings proudly depicting Mexican history and culture. Many artists, including Rivera, Oroco, Siqueiro, and Tamayo fused pre Columbian and modernistic art styles to create the face of a new modern Mexico. their artwork is displayed on the walls of public buildings across the country for everyone to enjoy.



MEXICO CULTURE FACTS

- Mexican folk art culturally arose from the blend of the different Mesoamerican and Spanish cultures with Arabic and Asiatic influences. Mexico is home to a wide range of folk art, with styles unique to different regions. In Puebla, one could find ornate talavera covered in symmetric designs of white, blue and gold. In Oaxaca, one could find a variety of crafts created with a unique black clay design. In the regions of Zacatecas and Nayarit, the Huichol people have created many sculptures and masks covered in colorful and ornate beads for public display.
- There are over 300 languages spoken in Mexico. While Spanish is certainly the most widespread language in the country it is not its official language. The Mexican constitution does not mention an official language, and the Mexican government recognizes over sixty different languages which includes Spanish and many languages spoken by Mexico's diverse Indigenous population. Indigenous languages are divided into over 300 different languages, and there are many other languages that are spoken but not classified.
- Mexican literature is filled with cultural rich and fascinating history. Mexico has produced some of the most important literary works in the Spanish language, including many styles from poems to novels and short stories. Literary works such as pro-feminist poetry of Sor Juana, the magic of realism of Juan Rulfo, and Octavio Paz's philosophical meditations on Mexican identity are all well known and read by people around the world.
- Sports are an integral part of Mexican culture. Since pre-Columbian times, when the "Ball Game" was played as a ritual to honor the Gods, sports have been an important part of life in Mexico. In later years, other sports such as horse riding and bullfighting were brought over by Spanish conquerors and enjoyed great popularity. Today, soccer is the most popular sport in Mexico, which has become the national pastime. Other popular sports include American football, basketball and baseball.

