

## Hotels

— Where to stay

Mexico City's hotel scene was once defined by giant foreign chains that bore little relation to the city and its culture. But a flurry of recent openings by young, entrepreneurial Mexicans (and a few expats) has elevated the capital's hospitality industry to new levels.

Generic skyscrapers and continental breakfasts have fallen from grace, in favour of carefully restored townhouses and rooms decked out with artisanal Mexican wares. Even some big names have embraced the shift: a 2015 renovation of the Four Seasons transformed the city's most prestigious hotel into something akin to a traditional hacienda.

We've scoured the streets from Centro Histórico to Polanco and found the best beds in CDMX, whether you're after a design-conscious stopover for a business trip or a refined Porfirian-era abode in which to hang your sombrero.



1 Downtown México, Centro Histórico

*Storied location*

This 17th-century palace once belonged to *la condesa* (the countess) of Miravalle – one of the wealthiest women in the Americas and the namesake of colonia Condesa – so when Grupo Habita turned it into a hotel in 2012, they made sure to keep its historic character.

Housed within the volcanic-rock walls are 15 rooms and two suites, with furniture by Mexican designer Paul Roco and an open-plan layout by Cherem Serrano Arquitectos. The rooftop pool and bar host regular parties, while the ground floor is home to fabled restaurant Azul Histórico and a selection of shops by Mexican artisans and designers such as Carla Fernández. “We’re more than just a pillow-and-breakfast hotel,” says Grupo Habita’s founding partner Rafael Michá. *30 Isabel la Católica, 06002 +52 (55) 5130 6830 downtownmexico.com*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** Artist Manuel Rodríguez Lozano’s mural over the main stairs dates back to 1945 and was restored during the refurbishment.





2  
Nima Local House Hotel,  
Roma Norte  
*Home from home*

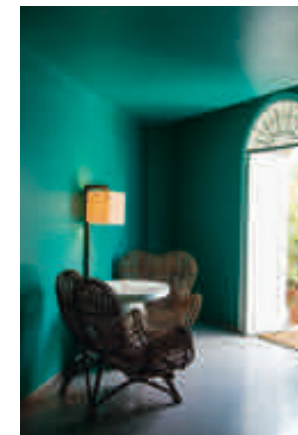
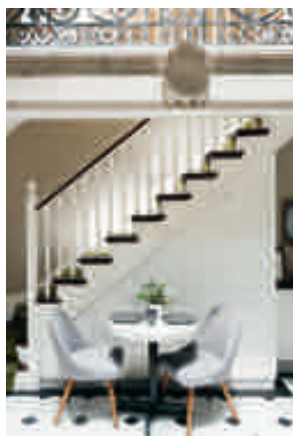
“Normally people’s reaction is, ‘Oh my, I’m in a Mexican home, not a hotel,’” says owner Regina Montes. And what a home it is: original parquet floors, cantera stone pillars and an intimate courtyard overflowing with a mighty *Monstera deliciosa*. The historic building dates to around 1910 and once belonged to one of Mexico’s greatest art collectors, Guillermo Tovar y de Teresa.

With the help of her brother-in-law José Ogarrio, Montes transformed it into a four-room boutique hotel in 2016, preserving all the features that give the building its character. In the rooms you’ll find artisanal textiles, cosmetics by Persea and complimentary wine from Mexican producers.

236 Colima, 06700  
+52 (55) 7591 7175  
[nimalocalhousehotel.com](http://nimalocalhousehotel.com)

**MONOCLE COMMENT:**

The verdant rooftop terrace is an oasis of calm, features a well-stocked bar and hosts regular starlit dinners for guests.



3  
Condesa DF, Condesa  
*Classic cool*

From the outside, with its tall arched windows and quaint Parisian-style balconies, this is a perfect example of the Porfirian-era architecture for which this part of town is famous. But the exterior belies the bright atmosphere and contemporary look of the smartly designed suites (featuring furniture from Paris-based designer India Mahdavi) and light-flooded inner courtyard.

The latter is a triangular space open to the skies, where breakfast and an all-day menu are served by executive chef Antonio Balderas. However, the hotel’s pièce de résistance is the rooftop bar, a favourite among both visitors and Mexico City’s artistic set.

102 Avenida Veracruz, 06700  
+52 (55) 5241 2600  
[condesadf.com](http://condesadf.com)

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** Condesa DF was the third hotel opened by Grupo Habita (in 2005), a brand that now has 14 stays throughout Mexico and the US. A new outpost opens on Calle República de Guatemala in Centro Histórico in 2019.





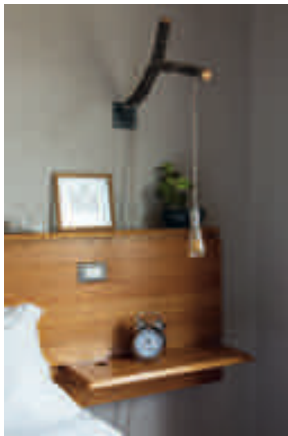


4 Chaya B&B, Centro (West)  
*Simply charming*

Chaya is found on the top floor of Barrio Alameda, a 1920s mansion recently revived by a host of new restaurants, cafés and shops. It's the work of three young and creative entrepreneurs: Cristina Mascareñas, Mauricio Carbonell and his brother Luis, who was the architect behind its simply designed spaces.

Chaya's charm is in the details: the locally produced furniture and art; the bath products by Mexican brand LoredAna; the music performances and events for guests; and the beautiful rooftop courtyard, a tranquil haven from the streets below. *3F Barrio Alameda, 9 Doctor Mora, 06050 +52 (55) 5512 9074 chayabnb.com*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** We recommend the Master Suite, a spacious double with a view over Alameda Central park and a handsome standalone bath.



5 Las Alcobas, Polanco  
*Tastefully appointed*

Hotels in upmarket Polanco are generally on the gaudy and uninspiring side but Las Alcobas delivers quiet luxury with an intimate atmosphere. The enormous rosewood staircase in the lobby leads up to 31 spacious rooms and four suites with polished wooden furnishings, floor-to-ceiling windows and marble bathrooms, plus a minibar stocked with Siete Misterios mezcal (see page 64) and complimentary artisanal treats.

Canadian design studio Yabu Pushelberg transformed the mid-century building in 2010 and, while few original features could be kept, discerning touches such as the quartz finish along the corridor walls make up for the lack of history. *390 Avenida Presidente Masaryk, 11560 +52 (55) 3300 3900 lasalcobas.com*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** The downstairs restaurant, Anatol, serves elegant Mediterranean cuisine and is the perfect venue for a business lunch.

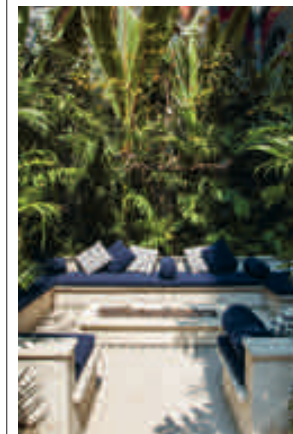


6 Four Seasons, Juárez  
*Centre stage*

Considering the fact that the Four Seasons sits on one of the busiest roads in the city, the peaceful ambience of its grand courtyard – akin to being in a hacienda – is all the more remarkable.

The hotel received a welcome renovation by French designers Gilles & Boissier in 2015. The rooms and interiors are luxurious, albeit aesthetically predictable, but it's the leafy courtyard that elevates this hotel above the competition. Sit here and enjoy a long lunch at in-house restaurant Zanaya, which opened its doors to great acclaim in 2016, or after-dinner drinks from bar Fifty Mills. The latter's negroni features chocolate bitters – and it's worth a visit just to sample it. *500 Paseo de la Reforma, 06600 +52 (55) 5230 1818 fourseasons.com/mexico*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** Every Sunday the courtyard hosts an opulent brunch that's open to the public. For a set fee you'll be treated to everything from grilled octopus and traditional Mexican cuisine to champagne and live guitar.







8 Ignacia Guest House, Roma Norte  
*Revamped residence*

This small B&B – a turn-of-the-century residence enhanced by earthy tones, modern furniture, Nordic-style lamps and Mexican pottery – was opened by architect Gina Lozada and Fermin Espinosa. The Oaxacan-style garden filled with cacti, palms and orange trees is the crowning glory.

Breakfast is made in-house and, come afternoon, cocktails are served alfresco. The neighbours from Casa Jacaranda also offer Mexican cooking lessons on their rooftop.  
*House B, 208 Jalapa, 06700 +52 (55) 5584 2681 ignacia.mx*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** Each suite has its own colour scheme (black, navy, ochre, pink or green).



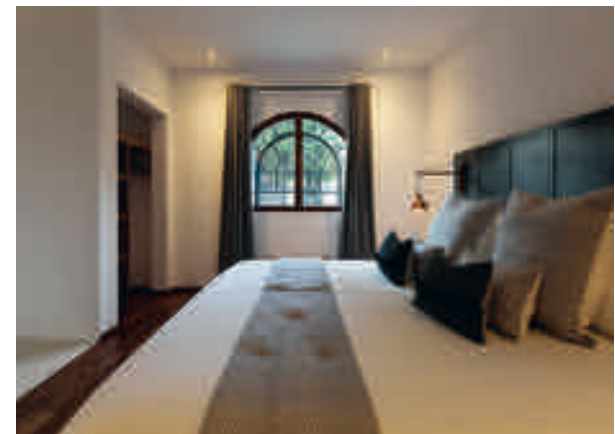
9 Casa Dovela, Condesa  
*Apartment living*

This California-style townhouse is a cross-junction between luxury home and boutique hotel. Franco-Mexican couple William and Andrea Tiburcio brought in French architects Emmanuel Picault and Ludwig Godefroy to transform the 1930s building into three spacious apartments. Two boast a second floor with an extra bedroom, while all feature a kitchen and living area.

The 24-hour concierge provides breakfast from nearby bakeries, while a chef is always on hand to cook lunch or dinner in the guest rooms. “Not having common spaces means more privacy, comfort and discretion for our guests,” says Andrea.

*152 Cuernavaca, 06170 +52 (55) 2155 6312 casadovela.com*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** The interior design is by Alan V Favero of Taller Lu’um (see page 50), who collaborated with Mexican artisans to deck the rooms with wares from Oaxaca, Michoacán and beyond.



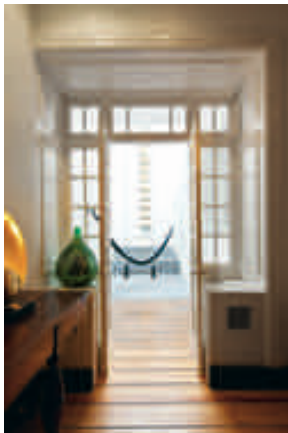
7 La Valise, Roma Norte  
*Self-contained suites*

This townhouse hotel, which dates back to 1920, was opened in 2014 by Belgian entrepreneur Yves Naman and was at one time his home. With French designer Emmanuel Picault he transformed it into a three-suite hideaway, each uniquely appointed with vintage furniture from Mexican regions such as Yucatán and Michoacán.

Since there are no common areas or restaurant, every room has its own living area and kitchen and is catered for by renowned restaurant Rosetta, whose staff will bring over an opulent spread from across the road if you don’t feel like cooking. Our pick of the three suites is the bright and airy La Terraza; its bed can slide out onto the terrace, for those who fancy a kip under the sun.

*53 Tonalá, 06700 +52 (55) 5286 9560 lavalise.com*

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** Guests receive complimentary caffeine hits from next-door Almanegra (see page 40) – one of the first cafés in the city to favour European-style coffee culture.





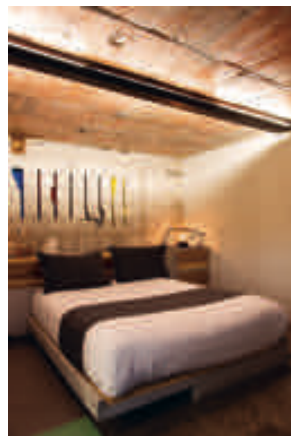


10 Hotel Carlota, Cuauhtémoc  
*Urban space*

Named after the wife of Mexico's short-lived Habsburg emperor Maximilian I (see page 70), this city bolthole exudes gritty, unfettered charm, courtesy of designer Javier Sánchez. At the centre is a slim swimming pool with a glass edge, that sports weekly parties, flanked by a long bar that's popular with the city's designers, artists and entrepreneurs. The mezzanine floor above hosts the in-house restaurant where chef Joaquín Cardoso (who trained under Enrique Olvera of Pujol) serves refined Mexican dishes.

The 36 rooms are spacious, with thoughtful touches: complimentary mezcals by Barro de Cobre and Revolución tequila, ceramics by Lagos del Mundo and plush Oaxacan textiles. 73 Río Amazonas, 06500 +52 (55) 5511 6300 [hotelcarlota.com.mx](http://hotelcarlota.com.mx)

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** All of the six suites boast cosy little terraces with a hammock – ideal for a midday siesta.



11 Casa Nuevo León, Condesa  
*Cool and contemporary*

Casa Nuevo León ticks all the boxes for design-conscious travellers on a budget. It's basic but more than does the job, thanks to a great refurbishment of a historic building (the tile work is stunning) and an interior design concept and furniture by La Metropolitana (see page 52).

The 14-bedroom hotel also has a terrace and a charming café that's accessed via a set of French doors from the lobby. 120 Avenida Nuevo León, 06100 +52 (55) 7030 2931 [lacasamuevoleon.com](http://lacasamuevoleon.com)

**MONOCLE COMMENT:** Windows aren't double-glazed here and the street-facing rooms can be noisy. Pick an inward-facing room for more peace and quiet.

