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One of the capital's principal avenues is Paseo de la Reforma, originally built as a route from the Emperor's residence at Chapultepec to the National Palace One of Mexico City's principal thoroughfares is Paseo de la Reforma. Known locally as simply Reforma, the thoroughfare takes you from the downtown area all the way to the famous Chapultepec Park, running through one of the capital city's main financial and business districts, and one of main tourist zones. The original avenue was built by the Emperor Maximilian as a route from his residence at Chapultepec Castle to the National Palace in the city center, where the affairs of government were conducted. Its original name was Paseo de la Emperatriz, in honor of Carlota who, it would appear, made a good deal of the decisions at the castle. Following the defeat of Maximiliano, the name of the avenue was changed to Reforma, in honor of the reforms carried out under President Benito Juárez. Some of its more famous landmarks, particularly the Angel of the Independence, were built during the long dictatorial rule of Porfirio Díaz. The Angel was built in the first decade of the 20th century and inaugurated in 1910 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the war for independence. Others include the monument to Cuauhtémoc—the last Aztec emperor—and one to Christopher Columbus. Reforma has benefited over the decades from periods of renovation, or beautification projects, by the imperial residence, Chapultepec Castle, which was then on the southwestern edge of town. The project was originally named Paseo de la Emperatriz ("Promenade of the Empress") in honor of Maximilian's consort Empress Carlota. After the fall of the Empire and Maximilian's subsequent execution, the Restored Republic renamed the Paseo in honor of the Torre Mayor, Latin America's tallest building. It remains, however, a place for "paseos." Aside from the historic monuments, moving up past the castle are the museums of anthropology and modern art, and of course the Chapultepec zoo, which was the first in the world outside China to breed giant pandas in captivity. At weekends it remains a place for leisure, with stretches of the road closed to traffic on Sundays so that cyclists, or mini-marathon runners, can use it. The latest of the monuments is the Estela de Luz (Pillar of Light), built to mark the 200th anniversary of the Independence and 100th anniversary of the 1910-1917 Revolution. The monument has been the cause of some controversy; about the design, the cost, and the fact that it wasn't ready in time for those bicentennial-centennial celebrations in 2010. The monument lies across Reforma from the Torre Mayor. Visitors should probably make up their own minds about its merits or faults next time they go for a paseo down Reforma. Image of Paseo de la Reforma taken from the top of the Angel of Independence by Mundial Photo Mexico in your inbox Our free newsletter about Mexico brings you a monthly round-up of recently published stories and opportunities, as well as gems from our archives. Wide avenue in Mexico City For the shopping mall in Nuevo Laredo, see Paseo Reforma. Paseo de la ReformaPaseo de la Reforma as seen from Chapultepec Castle.Length14.7 km (9.1 mi)LocationMexico City, MexicoNearest metro stationAuditorio, Garibaldi / Lagunilla, HidalgoCoordinates19°26′04″N 99°09′07″W﻿ / ﻿19.43444°N 99.15194°W﻿ / 19.43444; -99.15194 Paseo de la Reforma skyline Paseo de la Reforma (literally "Promenade of the Reform") is a wide avenue that runs diagonally across the heart of Mexico City. It was designed at the behest of Emperor Maximilian by Ferdinand von Rosenzweig during the era of the Second Mexican Empire and modeled after the great boulevards of Europe.[1] such as the Ringstraße in Vienna and the Champs-Élysées in Paris. The planned grand avenue was to link the National Palace with the imperial residence, Chapultepec Castle, which was then on the southwestern edge of town. The project was originally named Paseo de la Emperatriz ("Promenade of the Empress") in honor of Maximilian's consort Empress Carlota. After the fall of the Empire and Maximilian's subsequent execution, the Restored Republic renamed the Paseo in honor of the La Reforma. It is now home to many of Mexico's tallest buildings such as the Torre Mayor and others in the Zona Rosa. More modern extensions continue the avenue at an angle to the old Paseo. To the northeast it continues toward Tlatelolco, where it changes its name near the Plaza de las Tres Culturas. There it divides into Calzada de Guadalupe and Calzada de los Misterios that continue toward La Villa. Its western portion going west from Chapultepec Park passes south of Polanco on its way through the affluent neighborhood of Lomas de Chapultepec and then into Cuajimalpa and Santa Fe on the outskirts of the city, although when it reaches this point it is more a highway than a promenade. Today, the Reforma is filled with tourist attractions, luxury restaurants and hotels, office buildings, public art exhibitions, and new construction. Reforma is a common location for Mexicans to celebrate or protest. Most protest rallies commonly go along Reforma from the Angel of Independence to the Zócalo, or from the Zócalo to Los Pinos. Many parades, such as Mexico City Pride, make their way through Reforma. The Angel of Independence roundabout is an iconic representative of the city, and is the main place of the celebration of victories of the national football team, such as during World Cups. Motor vehicle traffic on the main downtown part of the Paseo shuts down most Sundays 8am-2pm as part of the Paseo Dominical Muévete en bici program of the Mexico City government.[2][3] Nivel cero de la Ciudad de México, topographic monument 1875, to mark the path of the Paseo. Ornate King Charles IV of Spain statue of the Paseo de la Reforma in the 19th century. In 1864, during the French intervention in Mexico, the capital and much of the country was controlled by the French, with Juárez's republican government on the run in northern Mexico. In Mexico City Maximilian I was installed as emperor. He took up residence in Chapultepec Castle with his wife Empress Carlota. Modernizing the capital was part of a more general reform program to modernize the country. These included the building of infrastructure to improve domestic communications, including roads and railroads. One such project type was the creation of a series of boulevards, imitating European ones such as the Ringstraße in Vienna, or the ones under construction at that time in Paris under Napoleon III, lined with grand monuments.[4] Two such projects were begun, one on Avenida Chapultepec, which was never completed, and the other to connect the city center with Chapultepec Castle. The latter was named Paseo de la Emperatriz, in honor of Empress Carlota, and was to be for the personal use of the Emperor.[5] Austrian mining engineer Alois Bolland was put in charge of the project and designed what was finally implemented. The route and the construction of six boulevards radiating outward from the Zócalo, Mexico City's main square, was assigned to a committee of prominent architects (Carl Gangolf and Ramón Rodríguez Arangoiti) and artists (Felipe Sojo, Miguel Noreña, Santiago Rebull). The committee's original proposal planned. However, this would have required the demolition of large portion of the buildings in the city, as happened in Paris. The committee decided instead to begin the boulevard at what was then the edge of the city, 1.5 km west of the Zócalo, where Avenida Bucareli meets Avenida Juárez and where the Equestrian statue of Charles IV of Spain stood. From that location, the Paseo's route led to the bottom of the royal residential area at Chapultepec Castle, where it connected to the road circling up to the castle at the top of the hill.[6][7] Another 19th century photo now showing Monument to Columbus (1877) The Austrian engineers Bolland and Ferdinand von Rosenzweig were assigned to construct the boulevard. Originally it included two vehicle paths, 9 meters wide each, a central island 1.5 meters wide, and two pedestrian side paths, each 9 meters wide, resplendent with ornamental plants and trees. The city government and the owners of the agricultural land along the route opposed the plan. Reasons included the fragility of the land, which was reclaimed lake bed of Lake Texcoco, and that the saltness of the soil would supposedly not support the lush vegetation required. Monument to Cuauhtémoc Despite opposition, the project continued. After a competition, it was assigned to the brothers Juan and Ramón Ageta under the supervision of the Ministry of Development, Colonization, Industry and Commerce, headed by Luis Robles Pezuela. Of the original 3.15 km-long project, only one part was completed between 1864 and 1865, a road 20 meters wide, which was enormous for those days, without a central median, only a few areas on the side reserved for horses to rest. There were practically no buildings along the boulevard and sidewalks were not considered necessary.[6][7] The Paseo did not include bridges or similar constructions to cross the canals and rivers which then flowed near what is now Colonia Tabacalera (then Hacienda de la Teja). The Paseo was at this time for the exclusive use of the imperial court, a policy enforced by a dedicated police force. At the time, people with horses or horses and carriages, promenaded along the Paseo de Bucareli (today Avenida Bucareli between Avenidas Juárez and Chapultepec).[6][7] After the downfall of the Second Mexican Empire and the restoration of the republic in 1867, the Paseo de la Emperatriz was renamed Calzada Degollado in honor of General Santos Degollado and then in 1872 Paseo de la Reforma.[6][7][8] On February 17, 1867, the Paseo officially opened to the public while work continued on it. By 1870 it had tree-lined pedestrian medians between "el Caballito" and the Palm Tree Roundabout, carried out by the Ministry of Development under Francisco P. Herrera. Between 1872 and 1876 an eight-meter bridge was built at Hacienda de la Teja and the pedestrian medians were completed all the way to Chapultepec. Eucalyptus and ash trees and willows were planted and four monumental roundabouts (glorietas) were built between the Palm Tree Roundabout and Avenida Juárez. In 1872 the boulevard was renamed Paseo de la Reforma. On its flanks, upscale subdivisions were built, Colonia Americana – today Colonia Juárez, and Colonia Cuauhtémoc. The French style of the area was epitomized at the time by frequent comparisons of Paseo de la Reforma to the Champs Elysées in Paris.[6][7] Liberal general Porfirio Díaz seized president power in 1876 after having distinguished himself as a leader in the war against the French Intervention. As president, he fully supported the embellishment of the Paseo de la Reforma with staturary representing Mexico's heroes through its history, creating "monuments worth of the culture of this city, and whose sights remind of the heroism with which the nation fought against the Conquest in the sixteenth century and for the Independence and Reform in the present."[9] Initially, liberal General Vicente Riva Palacio, grandson of liberal leader of independence Vicente Guerrero, was involved in projects to raise the capital's profile when he served as Díaz's Minister of Development (fomento) (1876–1879). As part of the centralizing impetus of Díaz's government, the Paseo de la Reforma was to include statues of heroes and cultural eminences of Mexico's constituent states, although some state leaders objected to the reassertion of traditional Mexico City's power.[10] The major intersections of the broad avenue's sides, they mainly honr Mexican liberals, as well as some writers and journalists who influenced political discourse. Guadalupe Victoria (1786–1843), military hero of independence and the first president of Mexico, is honored in a low key way considering his accomplishments. Others with name recognition in Mexican history are Fray Servando Teresa de Mier (1765–1827), Carlos María de Bustamante (1774–1848), historian; José María Luis Mora (1794–1850); Miguel Ramos Arizpe (1775–1843), "father of Mexican federalism"; Andrés Quintana Roo (1787–1851), after whom a state is named; Miguel Lerdo de Tejada (1812–1861), prominent politician in the liberal Reform; Melchor Ocampo (1814–1861), radical liberal, murdered during the War of the Reform; Guillermo Prieto (1818–1897), prominent journalist; Gabino Barreda (1818–1881), Positivist philosopher and educator; Ignacio Manuel Altamirano (1834–1893), intellectual and writer of indigenous origins; and Vicente Riva Palacio (1832–1896), liberal general, writer, and politician, who died in Spanish exile. History is written by the victors, so that absent from the array of liberal heroes are statues of prominent Mexican conservatives Antonio López de Santa Anna, general and president of Mexico for much of the early 19th century; and Lucas Alamán, historian and politician. Also absent is a statue Porfirio Díaz, liberal general and president from 1876 to 1911, when the regime was overthrown by the Mexican Revolution. Monumento a los Niños Héroes, inaugurated in 1952 A monument, officially called the "Altar to the Homeland" (Altar a la Patria), honors the Niños Héroes – the Heroic Cadets of the Battle of Chapultepec – with a particularly grand monument in the entrance of Chapultepec Park. Heroes of South America independence include Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín. There is also a fountain with sculptures that commemorate the nationalization of Mexico's oil reserves and industry in 1938, and the Diana the Huntress Fountain that includes a statue featuring the Roman goddess Diana originally named The Arrow Thrower of the North Star. The Angel of Independence – a tall column with a gilded statue of a Winged Victory (that bears resemblance with an angel, therefore its common name) on its top and many marble statues on its base depicting the heroes of the Mexican War of Independence, built to commemorate the centennial of Mexico's independence in 1910. The base contains the tombs of several key figures in Mexico's war of independence. Near the central section of Reforma, across from the Alameda, is the Monumento a la Revolución ("Monument to the Revolution"). This is an enormous dome supported by four arches. It was originally planned, by Porfirio Díaz, to be a part of a new parliament building, but it never was completed because of the start of the Mexican Revolution. After Díaz's overthrow it became a monument to the revolution that deposed him. The remains of Francisco I. Madero and several other heroes of the Mexican Revolution are buried here. Neighborhood(s) Point(s) of interest Mexico Federal Highway 15D, Paseo de la Reforma begins Lomas de Chapultepec Embassies of Peru, Ukraine, UAE, Israel, Finland, Iraq, Bulgaria Anillo Periférico, Fuente de Petróleos monument to Mexican oil expropriation Polanco Lebanon Garden, Campo Marte, Memorial to Victims of Violence in Mexico, Auditorio Nacional, Zona Hotelera (W, JW Marriott, Intercontinental, Hyatt Regency hotels), Winston Churchill Garden Auditorio metro station Chapultepec Chapultepec Zoo, National Museum of Anthropology, Museo Rufino Tamayo, Chapultepec Castle, Mexico-Azerbaijan Friendship Park, Museo de Arte Moderno crosses Circuito interior inner ring highway Cuauhtémoc/Juárez Main entrance to Chapultepec, Estela de Luz, Torre Mayor, Chapultepec Uno, Torre BBVA Bancomer, Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), Torre Reforma, Former Aeroméxico Headquarters Building, Peninsula Tower, Sofitel Mexico Reforma, The St. Regis Mexico City, Torre Punta Reforma Diana the Huntress Fountain ("La Diana") roundabout Cuauhtémoc/Juárez Torre Diana, Embassy of Colombia, HSBC Tower, Torre New York Life Angel of Independence ("El Ángel") roundabout Cuauhtémoc/Juárez Sheraton María Isabel hotel, Embassy of the United States, Torre Reforma Latino, Marriott hotel, Mexican Stock Exchange Intersection with Río Rhin/Niza, Glorieta de la Palma ("Palm Tree", or "La Palma") roundabout Cuauhtémoc/Juárez Torre MAPFRE, Reforma 222 Intersection with Avenida de los Insurgentes, Monument to Cuauhtémoc Tabacalera/Juárez Monument to Christopher Columbus, Hotel Fiesta Americana Reforma, National Lottery building Intersection with Avenidas Juárez and Bucareli, El Caballito sculpture by Sebastián, view west to the Monumento a la Revolución Guerrero/Centro Histórico Torre Caballito (Internal Revenue offices), Metro Hidalgo, Church of San Hipólito, Metro Garibaldi/Lagunilla, Monument to José de San Martín Intersection with Eje 2 Norte, becomes Calzada de Guadalupe/ Calzada de los Misterios Obelisk to Simón Bolívar Reforma and the Angel of Independence as seen from the Torre Mayor Church of San Hipólito section Straight line eight lanes end near castle Bronze vases are placed among the monuments Removing the original cactus-themed lawn Main entrance of the Museo Nacional de Antropología (National Anthropology Museum) Estela de Luz Torre St. Regis and the Torre Mayor, as seen from the base of The Angel of Independence Diana the Huntress Fountain The Angel of Independence How Doth the Little Crocodile by Leonora Carrington at Reforma 222 Mexican Stock Exchange Monument to Cuauhtémoc Torre del Caballito, named after El Caballito by Sebastián. Base of the Monument to Cuauhtémoc Plaza Reforma Monument to José de San Martín Monument to Kemal Atatürk, the founding father of the Republic of Turkey Mexico portal Avenida Presidente Masaryk, an upscale shopping district in Polanco, Miguel Hidalgo borough, Mexico City Paulista Avenue, a comparable Latin American avenue in São Paulo, Brazil The Paseo (Kansas City, Missouri), a 19-mile avenue modeled after Paseo de la Reforma Wikimedia Commons has media related to Paseo de la Reforma.
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^ Fernández Christlieb, Federico (2000). Europa y el urbanismo neoclásico en la ciudad de México: antecedente y esplendores. Plaza y Valdés. ISBN 968856799X.
^ Claudia Agostoni, Monuments of Progress: Modernization and Public Health in Mexico City, 1876-1910. University of Calgary Press 2003, pp. 79-80.
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^ Agostoni, Monuments of Progress p. 80
^ Justino Fernández, El arte del siglo XIX en México Mexico: Imprenta Universitaria 1967, p. 167 quoted in Agostoni, Monuments of Progress p. 94
^ Agostoni, Monuments of Progress, pp. 95-96.
^ "Abre sus puertas Reforma 222". El Universal. November 2007
^ "Así fue el día 1 de locura de Shake Shack en México". Expansión (in Spanish). 2019-06-28. Retrieved 2019-07-25.
^ Agostoni, Monuments of Progress, p. 81 Retrieved from " top of pageMark Vogfel 95 min readAngel of Independence Statue at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CityAvenida Paseo de la Reforma is one of the most important streets in Mexico City, Mexico. It stretches across the city, passing through many neighborhoods and connecting major landmarks. Originally designed in the 19th century to resemble grand European boulevards, the avenue has evolved into a modern corridor filled with skyscrapers, monuments, museums, and public spaces.Historical Background of Paseo de la Reforma Paseo de la Reforma was originally planned in the 1860s as a grand avenue connecting Chapultepec Castle, the city center, to the city center. Inspired by European boulevards like the Champs-Élysées in Paris, it was initially known as "El Paseo de la Emperatriz" (The Empress' Promenade) in honor of Maximilian's wife, Empress Carlota. Over time, the avenue was expanded and modernized, transforming from an elite boulevard into the financial and cultural center of Mexico City. Throughout history, it has been the site of significant events, including political rallies, national celebrations, and parades.Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico City From historic monuments to modern skyscrapers, street vendors to luxury hotels, Reforma captures the essence of Mexico City."Angel of Independence Statue at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CityGetting to Paseo de la ReformaReaching Paseo de la Reforma is easy. The avenue runs through central Mexico City, making it accessible by metro, bus, taxi, or on foot, depending on where you are coming from. Several metro stations, including Metro Insurgentes and Metro Hidalgo, provide easy access. If you prefer to walk, Reforma is pedestrian-friendly, with wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and green spaces.Reforma 222 Shopping Mall at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CityWhat to See on Paseo de la ReformaThe avenue is lined with many landmarks, monuments, and modern buildings, including the following:The Angel of IndependenceOne of the most famous landmarks along Paseo de la Reforma is the Angel of Independence. This golden statue, built in 1910 to commemorate Mexico's independence from Spain, sits atop a tall column. The monument is more than just a tourist attraction; it serves as a national symbol and is often the gathering place for celebrations and protests. Visitors can climb a staircase inside the column for a view of the city, though access is limited.Chapultepec Park at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CityChapultepec Park and CastleAt the western end of Reforma, you'll find Bosque de Chapultepec, a massive park with museums, lakes, and walking paths. Within the park, Chapultepec Castle sits on a hill overlooking the city. The castle has historical significance, having served as a military academy, imperial residence, and museum. It's one of the few castles in North America that housed royalty.Chapultepec Castle at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CityDiana the Huntress FountainAnother well-known landmark is the Diana the Huntress Fountain. The statue of the Roman goddess is a popular photo spot and is located at a traffic circle along Reforma.The fountain's location makes it a common meeting point and a visual break between office buildings and hotels.More About the Monuments and StatuesIn addition to the Angel of Independence, Reforma features numerous monuments dedicated to important figures in Mexican history. The Monument to Cuauhtémoc honors the last Aztec emperor, symbolizing indigenous resistance. The Monument to the Revolution, located slightly off Reforma, commemorates the Mexican Revolution and houses a museum inside its structure. The Hemicycle to Benito Juárez, situated in Alameda Central just off Reforma, is a tribute to one of Mexico's most influential presidents.The avenue also once featured the Monument to Christopher Columbus, which was removed in 2021 amid discussions about colonial history. A new monument celebrating Indigenous heritage is planned to replace it.Several museums line the avenue, adding a cultural element to the area:Museo Tamayo: A contemporary art museum in Chapultepec Park featuring modern Mexican and international artists.Museum of Modern Art: Home to works by famous Mexican artists such as Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera.National Museum of Anthropology: One of the most significant museums in Mexico, displaying artifacts from pre-Columbian civilizations, including the famous Aztec Sun Stone.Angel of Independence Statue at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CitySkyscrapers and Modern ArchitectureReforma is home to some of Mexico City's tallest buildings. Torre Reforma, one of the most distinctive skyscrapers, features a triangular design that stands out among the glass and steel towers. Other high-rises like Torre Mayor and Torre BBVA house corporate offices and provide panoramic views from their upper floors.Street Art and Public ExhibitsWalking along Reforma, you'll notice changing public art installations and temporary exhibitions. Sculptures, murals, and interactive displays often fill the median or sidewalks, bringing a cultural element to the business-heavy district.Shoes, Hotels, and RestaurantsThe area around Reforma is filled with hotels, shopping centers, and restaurants catering to tourists and locals. Upscale hotels like the St. Regis and the Four Seasons line the avenue, while shopping malls as Reforma 222 offer retail options. Restaurants range from casual eateries to high-end dining, with Mexican and international cuisine available.Street Vendors and Local FoodReforma is a great place to try street food. Vendors line the sidewalks selling tacos, elotes (grilled corn), tamales, and fresh fruit. Occasionally, small pop-up markets appear along the avenue, selling handcrafted goods and traditional snacks. Food carts serving tortas, quesadillas, and fresh juices are common, making it easy to grab a quick bite while exploring.Angel of Independence Statue at Avenida Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico CityBike Lanes and Sunday CiclovíaReforma is one of the most pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly streets in Mexico City. Dedicated bike lanes make cycling an efficient way to explore the area. On Sundays, the city closes sections of the avenue to vehicles, allowing cyclists, joggers, and walkers to take over the road. This initiative, known as Ciclovía, attracts thousands of people each week. Bike rentals are available at stations along the route, making it easy for visitors to join in.Seasonal Events on Paseo de la ReformaThroughout the year, Reforma transforms for various seasonal events and celebrations. During Día de los Muertos, large altars and colorful decorations line the street. Around Christmas, festive lights and holiday markets appear. The annual Independence Day parade also passes through Reforma, drawing crowds from across the city. These events make the avenue an ever-changing experience for visitors.Paseo de la Reforma is more than just a road – it's a central part of Mexico City's identity. Whether you're interested in history, architecture, food, or just a pleasant walk, the avenue provides a cross-section of the city's past and present. From historic monuments to modern skyscrapers, street vendors to luxury hotels, Reforma captures the essence of Mexico City.See AllThe Palacio de Bellas Artes: