

# Guadalajara

## **Guadalajara Tourism Celebrates Day of the Dead With Twitter Contest**

*Enter to Win by Sharing Photos Between October 24 and October 31*

GUADALAJARA, MEXICO – OCTOBER 24, 2016 – In honor of Day of the Dead (Día de Los Muertos), Guadalajara Tourism announces the launch of the “Day of the Dead” photo contest on Twitter. For one week, from now until Monday, October 31, users can enter by following @GoToGuadalajara on Twitter and sharing their best photos from Day of the Dead festivities throughout the world using the hashtag #DayoftheDeadGDL. One winner will be chosen at random to win a figurine of Catrina, the iconic character that is a central symbol of the celebration.

Day of the Dead celebrations take place annually from October 31 through November 2, as a tradition to honor and remember the deceased. With lively specialty markets and spooky tours of “haunted” graveyards, Guadalajara is a great place to experience the Day of the Dead, Mexico’s most surreal and eccentric festival.

Day of the Dead was designated an intangible world heritage by UNESCO in 2008 and holds great significance in Mexico’s indigenous communities. The celebration dates back to the 16th century and fuses pre-Hispanic religious rites with Catholic feasts introduced by the Europeans. Originally the festival took place in the summer, but over the years it was moved to its current date to coincide with Halloween and All Saints' Day.

One of the most prominent traditions connected with Day of the Dead involves building altars to honor the lives of family member and/or friends that have passed. In Guadalajara, everything needed to prepare an altar can be found at the Feria de Carton, a special Día de Los Muertos market in Parque Morelos, a few blocks north of the San Juan de Dios market in the historic city center. Popular decorations include Pan de los Muertos (bread of the dead), iconic candy skulls, wooden altars, brightly colored decorative tissue paper, scented candles and a stunning range of painted wooden or clay skulls. Depictions of Catrina, also known as “The Lady of the Dead,” are also often featured atop the altars. While skulls are commonly placed in the centerpiece, the altars also often feature Christian symbols like the cross and the image of the Virgin Mary, illustrating how the Day of the Dead is a unique synthesis of Catholicism and ancient indigenous ritualism.

For an unforgettable Día de los Muertos experience, visitors to Guadalajara can take a nighttime tour of the city’s oldest and most infamous cemetery, The Panteon de Belen. Belen once served as the burial ground for the old civil hospital, but in 1786 work began to transform the site into a proper cemetery. The cemetery was finally completed in 1844 and is divided into two areas, one for the poor and the other for the wealthy. Huge, gnarled trees give the site the appearance of a haunted forest. The cemetery’s gothic architecture is illuminated at night with atmospheric lighting that casts strong shadows across the sea of elaborate gravestones and giant, crumbling mausoleums. Bats flit across the night sky, and as visitors are guided along the perimeter walkway, they are stalked by hooded figures who slip silently among the gravestones. The Panteon de Belen is located in downtown Guadalajara at Belen 684. Daytime and nighttime tours are available from 25 to 68 pesos (\$1.35 to \$3.65 USD). Tickets can be purchased onsite.

Other seasonal events held in the greater Guadalajara area include Tlaquepaque, which takes place October 29, 2016 from 2:00pm to 8:00pm. During this Day of the Dead celebration, locals and visitors gather to enjoy live music and traditional food, while having the opportunity to provide offerings for the dead, view beautiful altars and experience streets filled with children and adults dressed-up in lively costumes. Traditional folkloric dancing, brightly colored outfits and sounds of roaming Mariachis combine for an unforgettable experience. For more information, visit [www.tlaq.com](http://www.tlaq.com).

### **About Guadalajara**

The birthplace of iconic Mexican heritage including tequila and mariachi, Guadalajara is the second largest city in Mexico and considered the country's cultural center. Each year, tourists travel to this cosmopolitan destination to experience a plethora of attractions including nearby magical towns such as Tequila, where the popular spirit is produced; explore colonial architecture; and visit museums and small towns with exquisite crafts and artwork. Guadalajara is the capital of the state of Jalisco, which is located in the center of Mexico, 350 miles west of Mexico City and 200 miles east from Puerto Vallarta along the Pacific Ocean. The metropolitan area of Guadalajara consists of four urban districts – Guadalajara, Tlaquepaque, Tonalá, and Zapopan – and three suburban districts, Tlajomulco, El Salto, and Tequila.

Travel to Guadalajara is easily accessible via the Miguel Hidalgo International Airport (GDL), which is located 24 miles from the city center of Guadalajara, with non-stop daily flights from major markets across the United States and Canada.

For more information on Guadalajara, please visit [www.visitguadalajara.com](http://www.visitguadalajara.com), follow us on Instagram [@GoToGuadalajara](https://www.instagram.com/GoToGuadalajara), Twitter [@GoToGuadalajara](https://twitter.com/GoToGuadalajara) and like us on Facebook at [GoToGuadalajara](https://www.facebook.com/GoToGuadalajara).

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