

Guadalajara

Eat and Cook Like a Local: Culinary Experiences Offer Travelers a Taste of Guadalajara

GUADALAJARA, MEXICO – OCTOBER 31, 2017 – One of the best ways to experience a destination is through its food, and Guadalajara is no exception, boasting a cuisine that is synonymous with Mexican culture. Its food is a mix of pre-Hispanic and Spanish influences, just like the rest of Mexico, but dishes have their own distinct flavors and are made with local techniques. Markets are the epicenter of the city's culinary experience, offering samplings of dishes popular with locals, including savory tortas ahogadas, birria, pozole, and sweet churros.

Guadalajara is full of great markets to explore, from the traveling street tianguis (open-air street markets) like Santa Teresita market that pops up in the city two days of the week and offers fresh produce, seafood, poultry, cheese and more; to the famous indoor market San Juan de Dios, commonly known as Mercado Libertad, the largest enclosed market in Mexico where vendors sell fresh produce, sweets, and a variety of local spices.

For visitors, classes and tours throughout Guadalajara provide an immersive culinary experience where they can learn about authentic ingredients to make and enjoy regional food with flare. Below are a few of the city's most famous dishes that visitors can explore.

- **Tortas ahogadas** is the signature dish of Guadalajara. This “drowned sandwich” is stuffed with fried pork then drenched in a spicy tomato chili sauce and served with avocado, onions and radish. The sandwich's crusty on the outside, soft on the inside birote roll can only be found in this region due to the type of wheat used and the city's altitude.
- **Birria**, a dish commonly served at celebrations, is a spicy Mexican meat stew made with either goat or lamb, cooked slowly with spices, and served with minced onions, cilantro and limes. It is an icon of the cultural identity of the people of Guadalajara and can be found at local restaurants and street carts (known as birrierias).
- **Pozole** is a savory and hearty soup made with pork or chicken. Dried large white corn kernels are simmered for hours, giving it a slightly chewy texture that becomes tender as the soup continues to cook.
- **Churros**, a fried dough rolled in sugar and cinnamon, look quite different in this region than the traditional tube-like dessert many are familiar with. Local churros more closely resemble a beignet without the powder, and are split down the middle and filled with a variety of sweet condiments like caramel and chocolate, then rolled in sugar and cinnamon.

Travelers can learn how to make these traditional dishes to enjoy at home by taking part in a variety of cooking experiences and culinary tours offered throughout the city, including:

- Visitors looking for an immersive culinary experience can book a five-day “**Gastronomy of Jalisco Tour,**” where they will get a taste of the culinary history of the area by touring Guadalajara, the artisan village of Tlaquepaque outside of the city, and the Guachimontones Archaeological Site, an ancient site with circular pyramids where an indigenous family will share traditional dishes. In addition to visiting the kitchens of some of Guadalajara’s most popular restaurants, participants will also take a guided tour through Mercado Libertad where they will shop for ingredients to make dinner that evening as they see, feel, smell and taste a culture. Pricing starts at US\$1,200 per person (double occupancy) and includes accommodation, guides, meals, and more. For more information, visit <http://acloserlooktours.com/tour-package/gastronomy-of-jalisco/>.
- Travelers can spend the day savoring torta ahogada and other traditional dishes as they explore the city on the full-day “**Gastronomic Tour in Traditional Guadalajara.**” This small group tour treats visitors to a history of the region’s most popular dishes like birria from the traditional neighborhood of Las Nueves Esquinas. The day ends with a trip to the colorful market to learn more about the fresh ingredients sampled throughout the day. With plenty of personalized attention from the guide, this is the ideal time to learn how to prepare these dishes at home. Pricing starts at US\$126 per person and includes light refreshments, hotel pickup and drop-off. For more information, visit www.viator.com/tours/Guadalajara/GASTRONOMIC-TOUR-IN-TRADITIONAL-GUADALAJARA/d5299-35999P1.
- At **Cordon Ross**, the first traditional Mexican cooking school in Guadalajara, visitors will learn alongside a culinary expert as they are taught the techniques to make a traditional Mexican meal. Classes include a trip to the local open air market (transportation included) to pick out fresh ingredients, cooking supplies, and a hearty lunch or dinner including main courses, desserts and beverages. Culinary experiences are offered every Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and are US\$130 per person. A six-day cooking course is also offered for those seeking a true culinary adventure, US\$680 per person. For more information, visit www.mexicancooking.mx.

For additional ways to visit Guadalajara or to view a full list of tour packages, visit www.visitguadalajara.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.

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