

Snapshots from Hidalgo

Former Santa María Regla Hacienda

Property of one of the colonial period's most prosperous mine-owners, Don Pedro Romero de Terreros, the first Count of Regla, this eighteenth-century building preserves traces of its imposing architecture, enhanced by its location at the bottom of a ravine. It was one of the count's three haciendas in the state.

Here he processed the gold and silver extracted from his mines. Inhabited only by slaves and foremen, bordered by the river and the ravine, escape was almost impossible; but just in case, the count had the walls covered with obsidian that would slash the hands of anyone who tried to climb them to ribbons. Now a hotel, the building preserves many of its original installations, plus a halo of mystery: they say the ghost of Don Pedro still wanders through its halls doing penance for having killed his own daughter for falling in love with a penniless miner. They also say that Don Pedro promised Carlos III that when he visited New Spain, he would cover the road from Veracruz to Hidalgo with gold and silver so his feet would never touch plebian ground.



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Hidalgo's Basaltic Prisms

Millions of years ago, rapidly cooling lava falling into a ravine formed this vertical wall of giant columns, unique in the Americas, known as prismatic basalt. Approximately 30 meters high, these columns cover the walls of Alcholoya Ravine and are dotted with waterfalls tumbling among the prisms to the river below. Baron von Humboldt praised their beauty in 1803. They are located an hour and a half from Mexico City, 38 kilometers from Pachuca, the state capital, and only 5 kilometers from the magical town of Huasca de Ocampo.



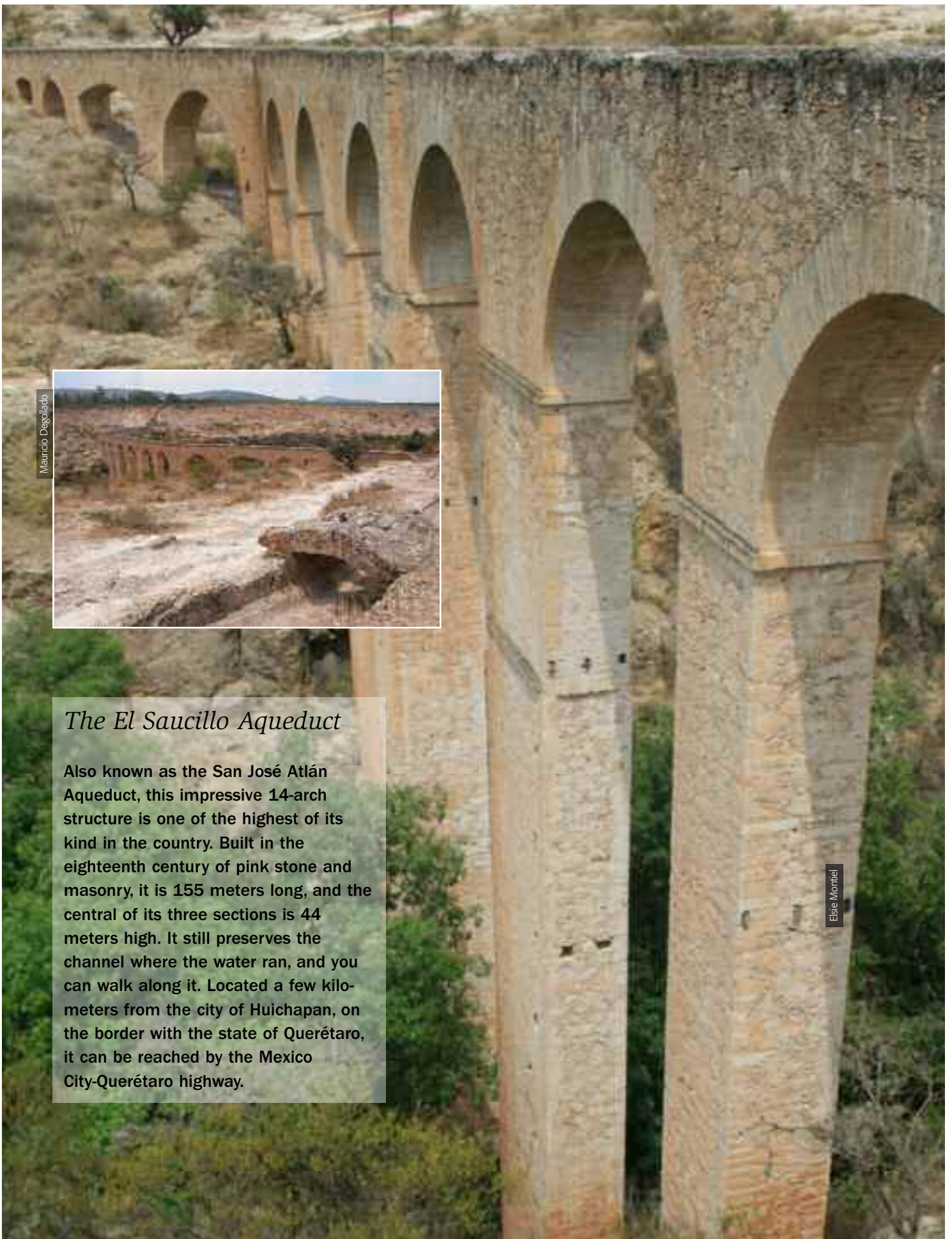
Huichapan *A Magical Town*

This city and its surroundings' attractions include monumental nineteenth-century architecture, delicious regional cuisine, cave paintings more than 3,000 years old, the highest aqueduct in the hemisphere and thermal baths. It was here that independence was celebrated for the first time in Mexico, on September 16, 1812. Three religious buildings, the Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel, the Chapel of the Third Order and the San Mateo Parrish, testify to architecture from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The atrium cross sculpted out of a single piece of stone fuses elements of indigenous and European art to depict the passion of Christ. The Municipal Palace, built at the end of the nineteenth century, is a magnificent example of stone work.



Photos by Mauricio Degollado





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The El Saucillo Aqueduct

Also known as the San José Atlán Aqueduct, this impressive 14-arch structure is one of the highest of its kind in the country. Built in the eighteenth century of pink stone and masonry, it is 155 meters long, and the central of its three sections is 44 meters high. It still preserves the channel where the water ran, and you can walk along it. Located a few kilometers from the city of Huichapan, on the border with the state of Querétaro, it can be reached by the Mexico City-Querétaro highway.

El Chico

Located in the El Chico National Park, Mexico's oldest, this picturesque mining town, founded in 1565, with its rustic adobe, brick and wooden houses, is nestled in the heart of one of Hidalgo's most beautiful areas. El Chico seems suspended in time, surrounded by an exuberant forest of pines, fir trees and holm oaks, with its hundreds of rock formations, valleys, lagoons, look-out points and a river. Recently, it has become a jumping off point for eco-tourists, but it hasn't lost its peaceful rural feel. Among its attractions are the Purísima Concepción Church, the Cidral Dam, the Trout Corridor, the Milagro River, Cuervo Point, greenhouses with a select collection of flowers, crafts, tasty *barbacoa* and other typical foods.



Photos by Elsie Montiel



Acosta Mine Site Museum

Here we find testimony to three centuries of working the mine, a colonial aqueduct and a majestic stone engine house that used to hold one of the first steam engines in Mexico (1824). The metal gibbet and the winch house are a recent inheritance from U.S. investments in local mining. The visitor goes through the interior of the mineshaft without even noticing that he is entering the belly of the mountain. Retired miners tell visitors their stories like they were work mates, transporting them into the miners' world. In the nineteenth-century home known as the Supervisor's House, we can see images of Real del Monte's main mines, mineral samples and surveyor's instruments like theodolites and levels used in mining work.

Camino Antiguo a Guerrero s/n
Barrio de Acosta
Real del Monte, Hidalgo



Photos by Marco Antonio Hernández

David Ben Gurion Park

This modern 26.3-hectare park located on Camino Real de la Plata Avenue in Pachuca is home to the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Conservatory, a convention center, a concert hall, the Museum of Science and Technology, a hotel, a mall, a sculpture garden and lawns open to the public for meditation, yoga or Tai-Chi.

The central plaza is covered with 80x400 meters of 7 million painted tiles (in 12 different sizes and 45 different colors) designed by Hidalgo-born artist Byron Gálvez Avilés called *Homage to the Women of the World*



Photos by Mauricio Degollado