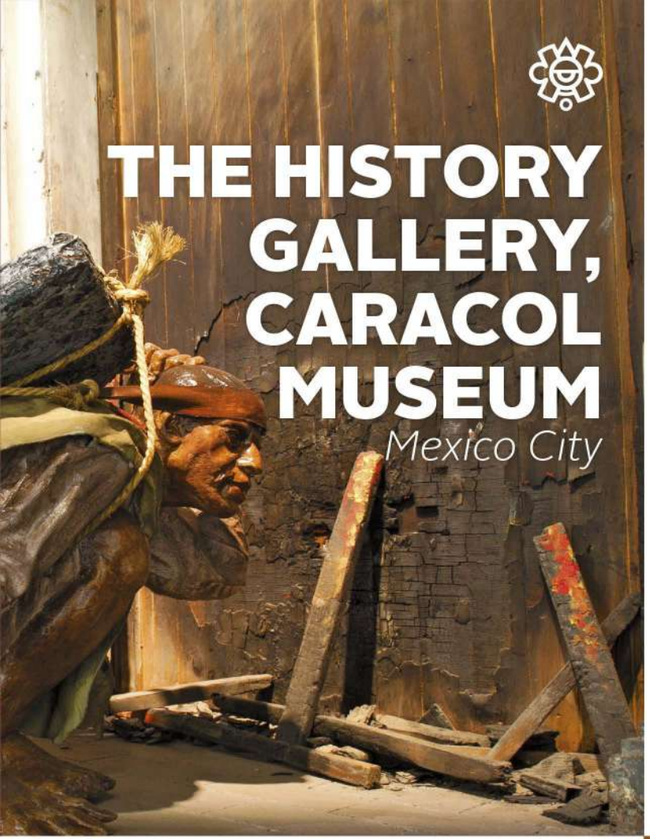


THE HISTORY GALLERY, CARACOL MUSEUM

Mexico City

/ MAIN ATTRACTION

Eagle Sculpture
José Chávez Morado, 1960

The Eagle made by sculptor and painter José Chávez Morado in 1960 is at the end of the museum. This monumental piece stands over the Constitution of 1917. Unlike the nation's emblem, this eagle appears facing forward, with wings outstretched and head turned slightly to the left. Anonymous figures are traced on its body to represent the Mexican people.

The eagle alludes to the founding myth of Tenochtitlan: it devours a snake clutched in its claws and beak, as a water channel runs through the serpent's body, alluding to the ancient lake. In front of it, like a standard bearer, is the prickly pear cactus on which, as the Mexica story would have it, the eagle set down to mark the site of the new city.

Where can the Eagle sculpture be seen?

In the Constitution Hall.



/ HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The History Gallery was created in 1960 as part of the pedagogical project directed by Jaime Torres Bodet, the Minister of Public Education in conjunction with celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the War of Independence and 50th anniversary of the Mexican Revolution. For this event, the most fitting way to commemorate these key years was to build an introductory museum to Chapultepec Castle to tell its visitors the history of Mexico in a clear and enjoyable way.

Prestigious collaborators participated in the project. The architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez built a two-story structure on the slope of Grasshopper (Chapulín) Hill entered via a ramp. Its spiral shape has inspired visitors over the years to call this space the Caracol (Spiral Shell) Museum.

The historian Arturo Arnáiz y Freg assembled the museum's historical content. The engraver and exhibition designer Iker Larrauri coordinated the creation of the dioramas, and the set designer Julio Prieto gave them a theatrical touch. Mario Cirett directed a group of model makers. Illustrators, painters, craftsmen, and modelers worked for seven months in reconstructing the past. José Chávez Morado created the bronze wall that receives visitors and the stone eagle sculpture in the Constitution Hall.

The History Gallery was inaugurated on November 21, 1960, by President Adolfo López Mateos. In the words of Education Minister Torres Bodet, the new museum was "an open textbook," a phrase that emphasized its educational importance. Since then, it has been visited by millions of Mexicans.



/ HIGHLIGHTS

- **50** — The museum has existed for more than half a century. Millions of Mexicans have toured its halls.
- **4,500 m²** — It seems small, but the Caracol covers 4,500 square meters (more than 48,000 sq. ft.).
- **65** — The permanent collection consists of 65 historical scenes narrating 153 years of history.
- The museum has 2,000 clay figures, 13 thousand plastic soldiers, and more than 1,200 miniature objects.
- The Caracol displays 17 battles, 4 constitutional creation processes, 3 triumphal entries to Mexico City, 2 foreign interventions, and 4 executions. All this in 3 foundational moments: Independence, the Reform, and the Revolution.

/ HOW TO GET THERE

The Caracol Museum is in the First Section of Chapultepec Forest, next to Chapultepec Castle. There is no parking, so the best option is to use public transportation.

a) By subway:
The Chapultepec station on line 1 is the closest.

b) By bus:
On Paseo de la Reforma the closest stop is the one at the Calzada Gandhi intersection, next to the Museum of Modern Art. On the Circuito Bicentenario, there is also a bus stop at Chapultepec.

/ $ ADMISSION

According to the Federal Fees Act, admission is free for students, teachers, and seniors with a valid ID, children under 13 and disabled people. Sundays: free admission for Mexicans and foreign residents.

/ SERVICES

Guided tours for school groups with prior reservations. Cloakroom. Shop.

/ PHOTOGRAPHY

For the use of any device to make videos, visitors must pay a fee. Non-professional photography, without the use of tripods, is free of charge and must be done without a flash.

/ HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday from 9:00 am to 4:15 pm

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/ COLLECTIONS

The History Gallery does not exhibit historical pieces. Instead, it displays dioramas: miniature theatrical representations and models of the key moments of the nation's past with a profound educational calling. Its collection, created more than fifty years ago, is already part of its heritage. The Caracol tells the story of the struggle of the Mexican people for their freedom in just over 150 years, from the end of the viceroyalty to the Constitution of 1917.

/EXHIBITIONS

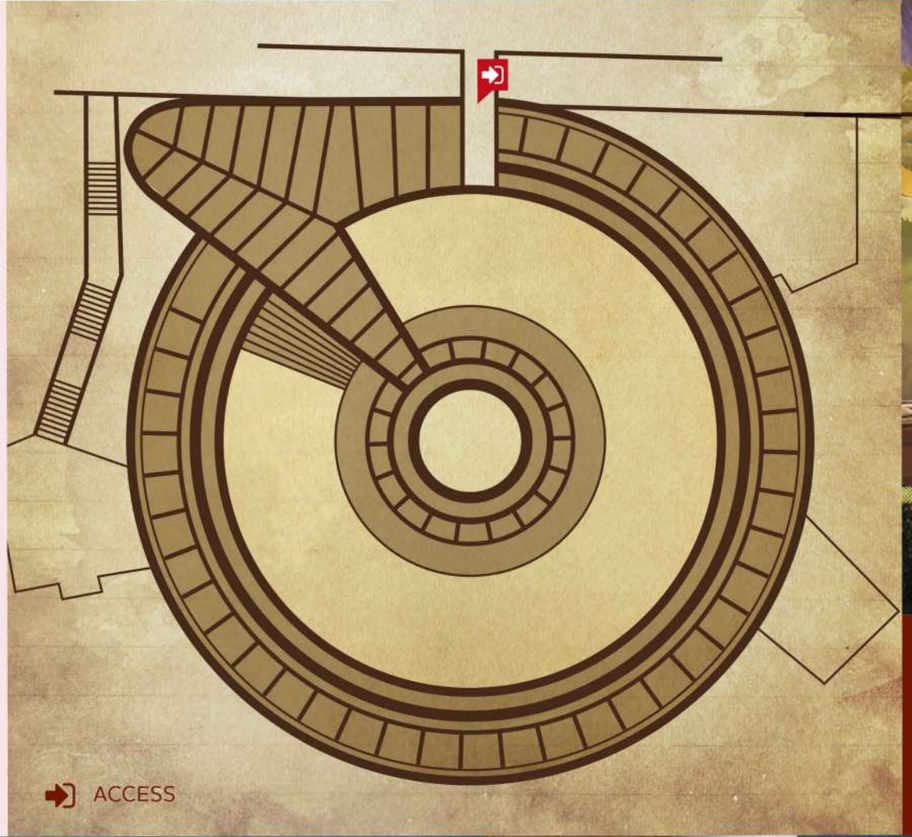
The museum has twelve halls dividing Mexico's history into five major periods:

- ## Independence and the First Empire

  Here the last years of the viceregal period are shown; the causes of the independence movement; the different stages of the war: the uprising led by Hidalgo and Allende, Morelos's campaigns, Vicente Guerrero's struggle, Xavier Mina's short-lived expedition, and the consummation carried out by Iturbide. The stage of the first Mexican Empire is also recreated.

- ## Republic and U.S. Invasion

  The first years after independence were very difficult. Mexico had to decide if it would be a republic or an empire. These halls represent those first decades in which the Mexican people struggled to strengthen their independence and defend themselves against the U.S. invasion, which ended in 1848 with the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty and the loss of half of the country's territory.





EXHIBITIONS

The exhibition galleries are arranged in consecutive order in the building's spiral layout.

/ Located on Grasshopper (Chapulín) Hill, the Caracol Museum is a spiral voyage through the history of Mexico.





- ## The Reform War and the Restored Republic

  The promulgation of the 1857 Constitution reignited the struggle between liberal and conservative groups. These were the years of internal struggles after the signing of the Constitution, the installation of the Second Mexican Empire, and the restoration of the Republic in 1867.

- ## The Age of Porfirio Díaz

  The Porfiriato refers to the three decades when Porfirio Díaz governed from 1877 to 1880 and 1884 to 1910. Various aspects of the period are shown, such as technological progress in the construction of railroads, life on haciendas, limited freedom of expression, and government repression at Tomochic, Cananea, and Río Blanco.

- ## The Mexican Revolution

  This section features the most representative moments of the Revolution, such as the attack on the Serdán family in November 1910, the triumphal entry of Francisco Madero into Mexico City, Zapata's agrarian movement, Francisco Villa's battles, and when Venustiano Carranza promulgated a new Constitution in 1917, in place to this day.