YOUR MUSEUM MINI GUIDE

Discover La Quemada's secrets

In this site museum, modern architecture nestles into the ancient landscape. Examine pottery used in rituals, everyday tools, and projections that bring temples and plazas back to life. Admire offerings made to Tezcatlipoca and browse five modules that tell his story. This restored museum awaits your visit.



Module I: Origin of the Name

This introductory space takes an in-depth look at the various names the archaeological site has been given over the centuries, including:

- Chicomoztoc
- Tuitlán
- Cerro de Los Edificios (Hill of Buildings)
- Coatl Camatl
- La Quemada

It also contains a brief history of the museum's origins and evolution.





Module II: Cerro de Los Edificios (Hill of Buildings)

This section features a large-scale model of the monumental complex. A platform provides a bird's-eye view, while multimedia resources illuminate specific buildings and project historical and current images with detailed information.

This space is complemented by a series of glass panels bearing a timeline with four key stages:

- Military and religious figures
- Nineteenth-century travelers and explorers (who documented archaeological sites from 1801 to 1900)
- Archaeological digs
- Institutional archaeology

Module III: Biodiversity

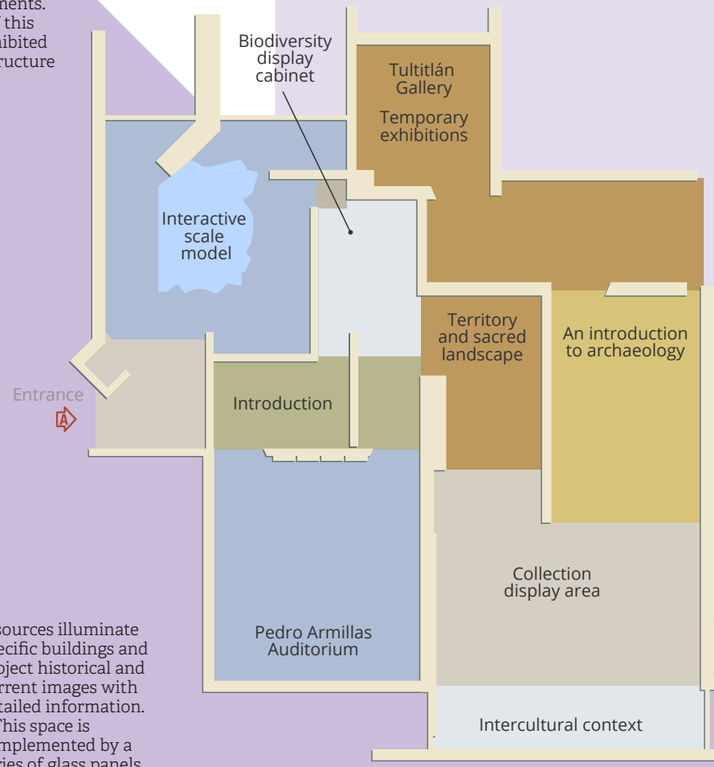
Display cases present a selection of the flora and fauna that were characteristic of the Malpaso Valley ecosystem during the pre-Hispanic occupation.



Module IV: Malpaso Valley Culture

This is a gallery devoted to the culture of La Quemada, revealing its connections with other sites and its sacred landscape. Nine display cases exhibit seventy archaeological pieces: pottery, sculptures, tools, and ornaments. Another part of this collection is exhibited on an angled structure attached to one of the walls. It includes a circular graphic sequence following the evolution of the Votive Pyramid and a mural timeline contextualizing the site in Mesoamerica and highlighting the four key archaeological zones in Zacatecas.



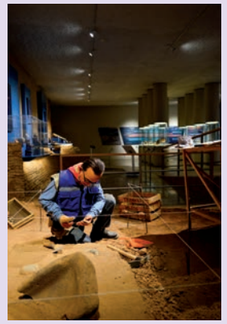


Pedro Armillas Auditorium

This was named in honor of the Spanish archaeologist exiled in Mexico after the Civil War who trained generations of archaeologists in Mexico and was one of the founders of the INAH (National Institute of Anthropology and History).

The space has been modernized (while preserving its original structure) with state-of-the-art multimedia equipment for the screening of an updated introductory video about the archaeological site.





Module V: Archaeological Excavation

This module recreates the excavation process to reconstruct the past. It is an immersive diorama visible from an elevated platform featuring sound effects (scraping, hammering, shoveling, sifting soil). Two interactive monitors explain archaeological work and related disciplines and ask questions to elicit visitor participation.

"Tuitlán" Temporary Exhibition Gallery

This is a space dedicated to temporary exhibitions that make the museum more dynamic and enable visitors to enjoy a variety of topics and expand their knowledge.

Relevant pieces: La Quemada's material legacy

The museum's collection exhibits masterpieces that encapsulate its inhabitants' craftsmanship and worldview. The most noteworthy pieces include:







Funeral pots
These monumental vessels used in burials have spherical bodies decorated with symbolic motifs and short, Romos-style necks.



Offerings to Tezcatlipoca
A set of four cups and a pot used in rituals associated with the cult of the deity of the smoking mirror, lord of the night and destiny.



NOT TO BE MISSED

- **Female figurines:**
  Depictions of women wearing elaborate headdresses and clothing reflecting social roles and possibly deities associated with fertility
- **Tools and ornaments:**
  Grinding stones, obsidian knives, stone axes, and bone needles: evidence of everyday life and technology
- **Unique pieces** of sculpture and stonework

TIMELINE



1831
Zacatecas Governor Francisco García Salinas issues a decree for the conservation of ancient monuments.

1986
Peter Jiménez Betts: a tripartite agreement between the INAH, SECTUR, and the state government for recovery and consolidation of the archaeological site and museum project.

1993
La Quemada is declared an Archaeological Monument Zone.

JUNE 23, 1996
La Quemada Museum opens.

2014
Closed for maintenance due to structural problems.

2019
Carlos Augusto Torres and Carlos Torreblanca: a collaboration agreement between the INAH and the state government to restructure museum operations.

MARCH 30, 2021
The redesigned La Quemada Site Museum reopens.





MUSEOGRAPHIC RENAISSANCE

The museum once housed avant-garde exhibitions on the pre-Hispanic cultures of Zacatecas but was closed in 2014 due to structural problems. It reopened with a renewed narrative, focusing on the history of La Quemada and its connection to other contemporary sites.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTION: A LAYERED LEGACY

The collection contains pottery from the **Malpaso Complex** (300/400–600/650 A.D.) including domestic and ceremonial objects decorated with incised-sgraffito techniques (engraving and scraping to create contrasts) and monochrome finishes. Highly elaborate pieces have been preserved from the **La Quemada** phase (600/650–850/900 A.D.), such as those decorated with the negative space technique and Pseudocloisonné (an imitation of the enameling technique employing metal dividers, using paint to delimit areas of color), the most striking of which is an offering of four cups and a pot made to Tezcatlipoca.

These pieces, more than mere objects, are bridges to a past where art, rituals, and survival were intertwined.



Location
The Site Museum is located within the **La Quemada Archaeological Zone** in the municipality of Villanueva, Zacatecas. Km 56 on Federal Highway 54 going from Zacatecas to Guadalajara.

Services
The complex has a service unit that contains restrooms, visitor-service centers, and an educational services area where you could take part in a permanent clay workshop or ask for a guided tour. Both the museum facilities and the service unit are outfitted with infrastructure to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities and senior citizens.

Opening hours:
Monday to Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

La Quemada Zona Arqueológica - Museo
La Quemada Zona Museo
museo_la_quemada

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Cultura
Secretaría de Cultura
INAH

Juan Gerardo Rivera Belmontes (archaeologist)
Xóchitl Hernández Noriega (archaeologist)

VOICES FROM THE PAST

The archaeological collection has been enriched and our understanding of the daily lives of ancient peoples has grown thanks to research conducted and donations made by surrounding communities. Items in the collection reveal regional relationships with cultures such as Chalchihuites, Bolaños, Tlaltenango, and Juchipila, and shed light on the cultural, commercial, and technological exchanges that defined the region's development.

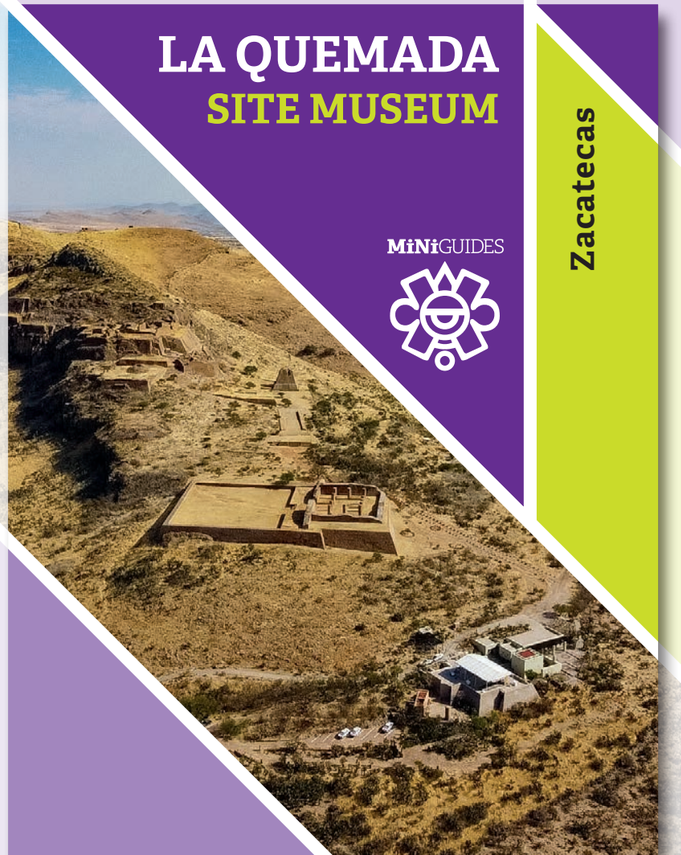




LA QUEMADA
SITE MUSEUM

MiNiGUIDES

Zacatecas



MUSEUM TOUR: AN IMMERSIVE JOURNEY

The new concept retains valuable elements of the original exhibition while integrating digital projections reconstructing the architectural components of the ruins. It is laid out in five thematic modules affording a chronological guide from the origins and development of La Quemada to its interaction with other Mesoamerican cultures, its decline, and its cultural legacy. This experience combines museum tradition with technology to reveal the grandeur of this site in Zacatecas.

OUR SPACE: HARMONY BETWEEN THE PAST AND PRESENT

Following intensive stabilization and conservation work on La Quemada's pre-Hispanic monuments in the 1980s and 1990s, the idea of creating a space that would provide information and services to visitors came to life. As a result of this initiative, a museum dedicated to the regional archaeology of Zacatecas and northern Mexico opened its doors on June 23, 1996.

Its innovative and respectful architectural design blends harmoniously with the landscape, seeking to establish a visual and aesthetic dialogue with the former settlement. Every part of its construction was carefully planned to honor the archaeological site's original layout and composition, thereby building a bridge between the grandeur of the past and contemporary contemplation.