

elite traveler

RESPONSIBLE LUXURY LIFESTYLE

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The Watch Issue

THE MOST MIND-BENDING
DISPLAYS OF CRAFTSMANSHIP,
RECORD-BREAKING
INNOVATIONS AND DIVINE
ARTISTRY



EXPLORE NEW HOTELS

by Michelle Gross

Clockwise from this image Suites at Casa Polanco have original crown moldings; the facade of the historic mansion; the hotel library; the bathrooms are resplendent in marble



New HOTELS

Casa Polanco

MEXICO CITY

With a population of 22 million, finding a sense of place in Mexico City can at times feel almost impossible. Dating back to the 14th century, the city's history is as layered and complex as the very ground that it was built upon. The Aztecs laid a foundation over marshes and lakes in what was then known as Tenochtitlan, and which today is this sprawling urban metropolis comprised of a dizzying mosaic of high-rise hotels and shantytowns in one blush, and leafy residential neighborhoods and bustling boulevards in the next.

There's no denying that there's an energy and dynamism that pulsate through this mountainous

megacity. Tucked away on a quiet residential street directly overlooking Lincoln Park, Casa Polanco opened its gorgeous cast-iron gates in June and is ushering in a new era of design-forward luxury.

Originally built as a private residence in the 1940s Spanish revival style popular at the time, the house has gone through several iterations of its own over the years. During a four-year renovation, first-time hotelier and Polanco native Octavio Aguilar wanted to create a sense of place that felt less like a trendy new hotel and more like the private home of your cool (wealthy) uncle who happens to have a flair for design, modern art and photography.

Upon arrival in the main salon, you are met by a river of emerald green Italian marble flowing under original arches and sandstone colonnades, spilling out into a light-flooded veranda that's been outfitted in a palate of earth tones, pale fabrics and floating

lights. At its heart, the limbs of Arrayan trees seem to dance in the early morning light, while the smell of freshly cooked huevos rancheros and chilaquiles courtesy of the hotel's private chef wafts through the air and invites you to sit down and stay.

STAY

Set in what is arguably Mexico City's most affluent residential neighborhood, Casa Polanco features 19 rooms (including 12 suites); no two are alike. The through line here, in addition to the light-filled suites and common spaces, is a sense of warmth that is further complemented by the delicate design touches. Original crown molding and custom textiles, unique objets d'art, photographs and paintings all come from the owner's personal collection and have been thoughtfully peppered throughout. The Lincoln Park Suite offers all the park views along with a



decadent terrace to drink it all in. It's an ideal spot to start and end your day with a freshly brewed coffee or cocktail.

DINE

Mexico City is a bona fide haven for food lovers, and just across the park from Casa Polanco are two of the city's most renowned locales. **Quintonil** (quintonil.com) is not only one of The World's 50 Best Restaurants, but it also serves up some of the best wine pairings and modern Mexican tasting menus. Also across the park, Enrique Olvera's **Pujol** (pujol.com.mx) has long been hailed as CDMX's preeminent fine-dining establishment, serving up indigenous ingredients along with its signature mole madre; reservations need to be made far in advance. Of course, if you feel like dining in, Casa Polanco's private chef Martha Brockmann has curated an

all-day menu that includes a mix of Mexican staples and comfort foods. Directly off the main foyer, the handsome jewel box-sized library with an Art Deco bar cart is the perfect place to enjoy Casa Polanco's delightfully floral house tequila, served slightly chilled in champagne flutes pre- or post-dinner.

RELAX

Set on the rooftop of the hotel, an intimate spa cabin features floor-to-ceiling glass doors and mimics a modern-day treehouse. It's perfect for an 'at home' session, and treatments range from a deep sleep and chakra massage to volcanic hot stones and reiki. Private yoga practice on the terrace, in the comfort of your suite or across the street in the park with Casa Polanco's yoga instructor, Marisol Gonzalez — as well as private Pilates classes — are also available upon request.

EXPLORE

The importance that light plays in modern Mexican architecture is largely attributed to one of the country's most influential architects, Luis Barragán. Be sure to pay a visit to his former home and studio, Casa Pedregal. On your way out, make a stop just next door where Tetetlán's gift shop comes chock-full of locally made textiles and designs that are well worth a gander — as is the eclectic restaurant that's built directly over volcanic stone. Back in Polanco, don't skip a stop at **Xinú** (xinuperfumes.com), a charming boutique perfumery, for a sweet-smelling keepsake to take home with you.

Lincoln Park Suite from \$990.

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