



Agave Landscape and Ancient Industrial Facilities in Tequila Earn World Heritage Site Status

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Mexico's newest UNESCO World Heritage Site highlights the plant and culture behind the tequila spirit

PR9.NET July 25, 2006 - MEXICO CITY, — The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization recently named the agave landscape and ancient industrial facilities in the town of Tequila a World Heritage Site. Ranked first in the Americas and eighth worldwide in this regard, Mexico now has 26 sites recognized for their historical, cultural and natural importance.

The region designated a World Heritage Site is located between the foothills of the Tequila Volcano and the deep valley of the Rio Grande River in Jalisco State. This area not only grows the fields of blue agave that produce the tequila spirit, but also houses the large distilleries where the agave "pineapple" is fermented and distilled.

Mexico's newest World Heritage Site comprises the urban settlements of Tequila, Arenal, and Amatitan, including the region's fields, distilleries, factories (both active and not), tabernas (distilleries that were illegal under Spanish rule), the towns and Teuchitlan archaeological sites. The property includes numerous haciendas, some of which date back to the 18th century.

The architecture of both the factories and haciendas is characterized by brick and adobe construction, plastered walls with ochre lime-wash, stone arches, quoins and window dressings, and formal, neo-classical or baroque ornamentation.

Tequila's World Heritage Site also comprises archaeological sites left by the Teuchitlan culture. This culture influenced the Tequila region from 200 to 900 A.D. through the creation of terraces for agriculture, housing, temples, ceremonial mounds and ball courts.

Uniquely Mexican, Tequila is renowned worldwide

The cultural influence of blue agave is felt both in Mexico and abroad, and is the reason why UNESCO has named the landscape and industrial facilities in Tequila a World Heritage Site. Used to produce tequila since the 16th century, the impact of blue agave in Mexico has such deep roots that today its culture considered part of the national identity.

Many visitors who travel to Mexico tour several leading distilleries to learn about tequila's history and production. To experience the agave-inspired cultural, visitors can travel to Guadalajara, the capital of Jalisco State and Mexico's second-largest city. From there, they can ride the Tequila Express, a four-car train ferrying passengers northwest 55 miles to the town of Tequila and back the same day. Passengers learn how tequila is made, and are served all the tequila drinks they desire. For more information on the tours, visit www.tequilaexpress.com.mx.

To read complete backgrounders on tequila and Mexico's other UNESCO World Heritage Sites, visit www.visitmexicopress.com.

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The Mexico Tourism Board (MTB) brings together the resources of federal and state governments, municipalities and private companies to promote Mexico's tourism attractions and destinations internationally. Created in 1999, the MTB is Mexico's tourism promotion agency, and its participants include members of both the private and public sectors. The MTB has offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America.

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