



TOLTEC COSMOGONY

Throughout the museum, visitors can enjoy original pieces that have been interpreted according to the Toltec-Chichimec conception of the universe.

EXHIBITION AREAS

Four exhibition areas address subjects such as the mythic origin of the Toltecs and their ceremonial centers; the construction of sacred space; the symbolic relationship between architecture, sculpture, and offerings to buildings; and how people routinely used the site to place offerings.

The history of this archeological site is narrated through the museum's exhibition of 170 pieces, most which were recovered during excavations performed by the archeological research project. In addition to these assets, there are two private collections entrusted to INAH for safekeeping and a sculpture on loan to the Regional Museum of Querétaro.



Address

Av. Hidalgo s/n, Col. Emiliano Zapata, El Pueblito, Corregidora, Querétaro. It lies 7 kilometers southwest of the Historic Center of the city of Querétaro, before reaching the Corregidora municipal capital.

Information

There are no parking spaces at the Museum or the Archeological Zone. Tels. 442 225 1132 & 442 225 3087.

Opening Hours

Wednesday to Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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[@ElCerrito.inah](https://www.facebook.com/ElCerrito.inah) [@ElCerrito_INAH](https://www.instagram.com/ElCerrito_INAH)

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Photographs: Ramiro Valencia.



INVALUABLE OBJECTS

These material remains include objects and vessels placed as offerings at its numerous altars. In the displays of its attractively designed permanent exhibition, the museum presents sculptures and objects recovered through archeological research conducted over the past 25 years, which were then selected and restored by specialists for display.



THE MUSEUM'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Inaugurated as part of the commemorations for the 80th anniversary of INAH's foundation, the museum explains the history of the largest Toltec ceremonial center in the north of Mesoamerica. It includes striking examples of the stone sculpture that decorated walls and facades with images of priests and warriors, as well as symbols painted in red, turquoise blue, and ocher.

ORIGIN OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL ZONE

The inhabitants of the southern part of the Querétaro valley built a square platform on a rocky elevation in around 700 A.D. On top of this, they constructed the base of a pyramid, whose construction system of stone-slab walls shows the influence of western cultures. This platform and small pyramid base became the first ceremonial center in the valley. After this first construction (900 A.D.), the Chicamecs founded the ceremonial and political centers known as Tollan toward the south. This origin myth incorporated other peoples, such as the Mixtecs, who had advanced knowledge of writing and calendars at that point. Both influences led to the rise of El Cerrito over the following 400 years.



EL CERRITO MUSEUM

MINIGUIDES



Querétaro

• TOLTEC COSMOGONY

YOUR MUSEUM MINI GUIDE

Permanent Collection

This is the site museum for the ceremonial center of El Cerrito (The Little Hill), a place with well-defined plazas, altars, and a pyramid. It is constructed on 13 levels with sloped volumes that are approximately 1.8 to 2 meters tall, reaching a height of 30 meters in total.

Gallery 1: The Origin of Mythical Tollan and Chicomoztoc

In this gallery, you can see the only stone stela in Mesoamerica to bear a depiction of the goddess Itzpapálotl, which was found at El Cerrito. You can also see a timeline of the main Toltec sites in Mesoamerica: Tula, Chichen Itzá, Tututepec, and El Cerrito.



Stela of an Itzpapálotl Warrior

Gray basalt monolith carved in bas-relief. 900-1200 A.D. Material: Basalt

Garden: The Cosmic Plane on Earth

The museum's central garden was designed to offer an interpretation of the earthly plane as conceived by the Toltecs. According to the *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca* codex, the earthly plane was divided into four directions and supported by an equal number of cosmic trees.



Gallery 2: El Cerrito, an Earthly Tollan in the North of Mesoamerica

In this gallery, visitors can appreciate visual elements designed to show the built architecture of El Cerrito, as well as some sculpture with calendar glyphs and a stone pin from the facade bearing a serpent's head. You can examine a scale model that reconstructs the original shape of the ceremonial structure and compare it with the pyramid itself, which you can see through the museum's only window.



Stone Pin

Architectural element in pink tuff, sculpted, polished, and plastered. It depicts the head of a serpent.

Gallery 3: Making the Space Sacred

Within a small altar, archeologists discovered an offering dedicated to the goddess Itzpapálotl, which consisted of handheld incense burners used to burn white flint arrowheads, beads in the shape of skulls, shell beads, and obsidian beads.



Finial bearing crossed darts

Architectural decoration in leucocratic lithic tuff carved in bas-relief. 900-1200 A.D. Material: Tuff



Gallery 4: Routine Use of Sacred Space

People routinely used these plazas and altars to make the spaces sacred and place offerings, many of which were burned in large braziers. The central piece of this gallery is a brazier in the shape of an hourglass.



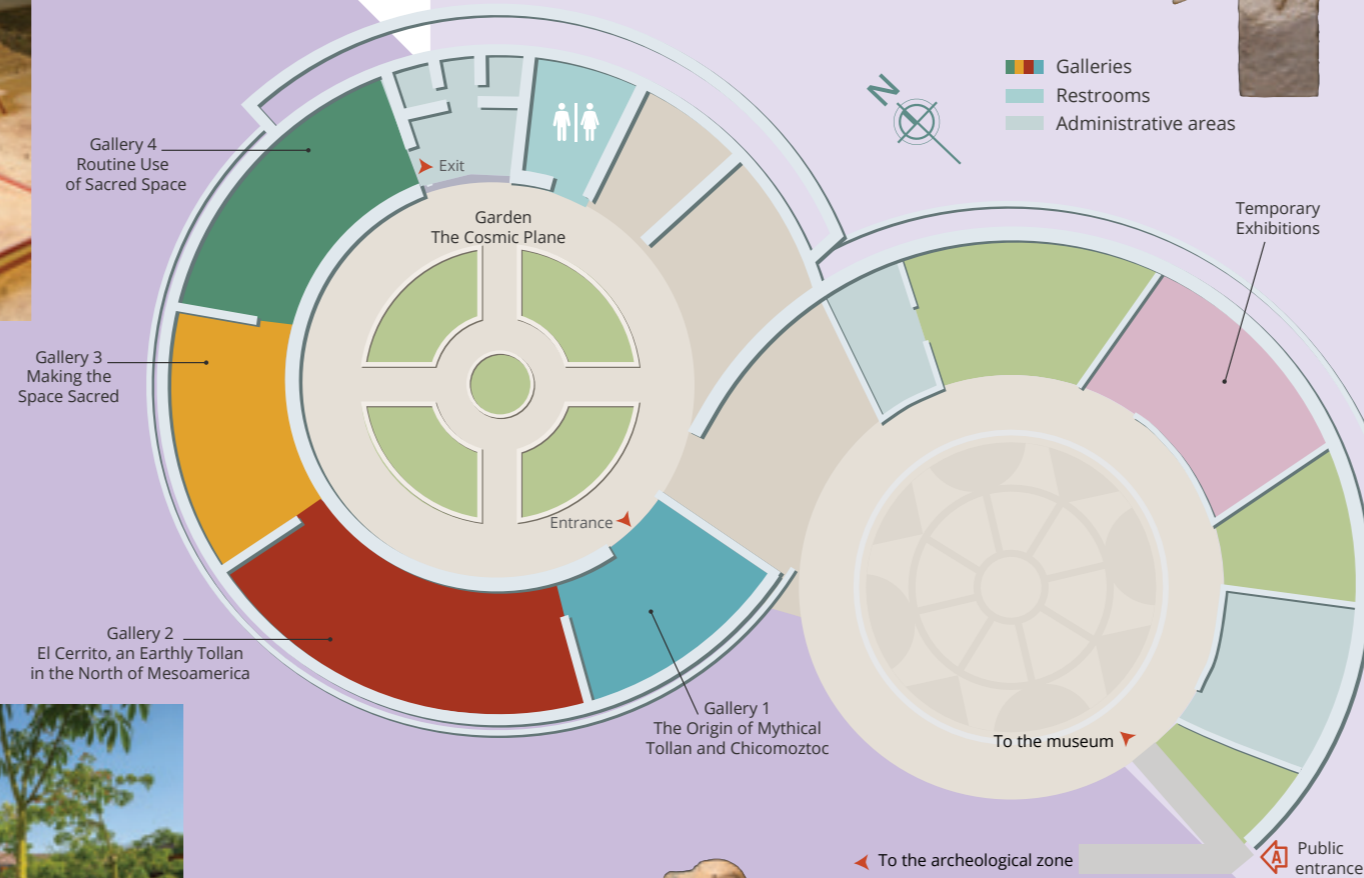
Brazier with lid

Large ceramic brazier in the general shape of an hourglass. On the outside, it is decorated with small applications of little balls or cones stippled onto its entire surface, as well as an undulation on the edge to decorate its symmetrical circular opening.



NOT TO BE MISSED

In Gallery 2, you can see a mosaic fragment, a piece recovered during excavations of the east face of the pyramid base that shows the rear of an eagle's body. The pigments used were white for the eagle's body, ochre for its legs, and red for the background.



Ceiba

These trees still form part of the natural environment and used to represent earthly elements of sacred space.



Old Man

An anthropomorphic fully-body male figurine showing the face of an old man, who apparently has his knees doubled over his chest.



EL CERRITO OVER TIME

700 A.D.

It established itself as an important political center in the Querétaro valley.



900 A.D.

It began a period of greater development in the middle of this century after the fall of Teotihuacan.



1200

During this period, it was a regional center for worshipping a fertility goddess.



1350

Despite the site having been abandoned, it persisted in the memory of some indigenous peoples, who came here to place offerings.



19TH CENTURY

A small fort was built on top of the pyramid base with 4 pentagonal towers around a powder magazine, which was later converted into a home for the Fernández de Jáuregui family.

