

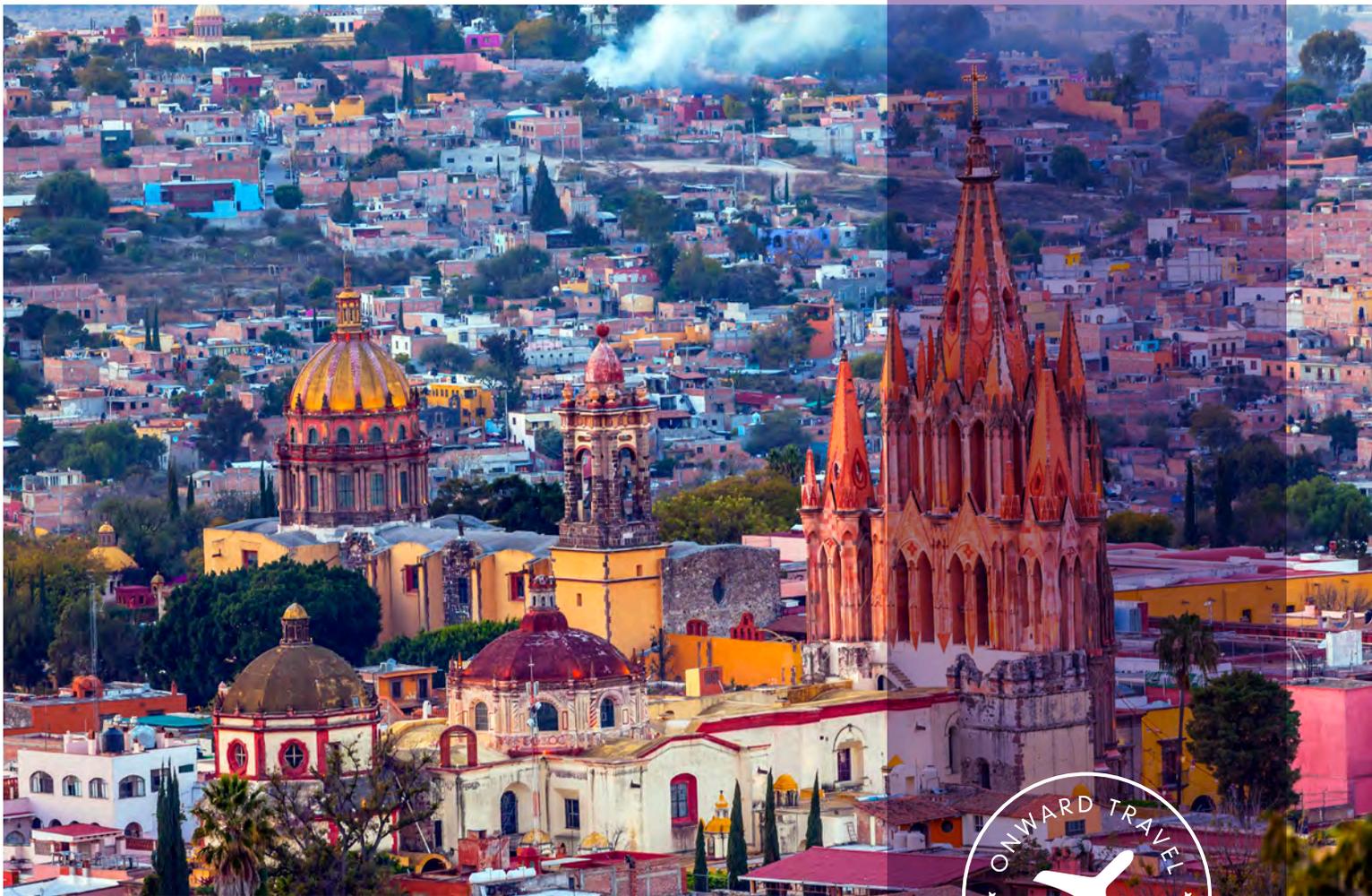


LA COCINA  
*de*  
SAN MIGUEL DE  
ALLENDE

A Culinary Adventure in Mexico  
*April 16 to 22, 2020*

ONWARD TRAVEL ✈️  
EST. 2014

The  
Chopping  
Block



THE NEO-GOTHIC CHURCH PARROQUIA DE SAN MIGUEL ARCÁNGEL'S DRAMATIC PINK TOWERS RISE ABOVE THE MAIN PLAZA, EL JARDÍN.

The awards and accolades for San Miguel de Allende have been racking up in recent years but it has long been an enchanting and captivating destination.

SMA is situated at an altitude of 6,400 feet with a refreshing year round spring-like climate and a beautiful mountainous backdrop. The cobblestone streets, pastel colored buildings, baroque Spanish architecture, and old churches make for a truly special ambiance. The culinary scene is absolutely flourishing so join The Chopping Block's Chef Quincy Bissic to journey to this picture-perfect colonial town to discover all it has to offer!

This 6-night tour provides lots of special experiences plus time for you to discover the city and its outskirts on your own. Our group will have exclusive use of 9-room Casa Calderoni, a quaint, well-located, and comfortable B&B. Enjoy three hands-on cooking classes and food markets; local cuisine from fine dining to street food; history, archeology, and astronomy; tequila, mezcal, and margaritas; and talents of local craftspeople, artisans, and musicians. We'll also partake in whatever cultural events are happening during our time in SMA where fireworks and festivals are almost daily happenings. As you'll see, there's plenty of inspiration and in this magical place... lots to celebrate!



## IMAGINE YOURSELF...

Sipping a cocktail on a rooftop overlooking picturesque SMA

Learning about pre-Hispanic times at a world class archaeological site

Strolling some of the world's prettiest cobblestone streets

## Bienvenido a México!

DAY 1: THURSDAY APRIL 16

- Hear about the exploding food scene from a local expert
- Dine together at a popular spot with one of the city's best rooftops

Journey today to Mexico's highlands. A transfer will be organized for you from Del Bajío Airport in Leon (BJX) or Querétaro Airport (QRO). We'll convene early evening for a welcome toast at our homebase, Casa Calderoni B&B. Hopefully you'll get a chance to stretch your legs after traveling and take in some of the sights and sounds of this beautiful city. An expert guest speaker will join us this evening to provide an introduction to Mexican cuisine and the restaurant scene in SMA. Mexican cuisine is recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and you'll experience many of its facets over this week long tour. Tonight we'll dine at one of Quincy's favorite spots, La Posadita, where the traditional dishes, margaritas, and views are perfect. You'll learn about Mexican cooking and use ingredients like cactus, chiles, and amaranth. Sip Mexican wine and expand your culinary knowledge with Chef Gaby.

Meals Dinner

## TOUR HOSTS

### Chef Quincy Bissic

#### *The Chopping Block Instructor Host*

Quincy has been a Chef Instructor with The Chopping Block since 2006. He has a great passion for cooking and enjoys teaching others to cook. When he is not at The Chopping Block, he can be found trying out new recipes on friends and family. Quincy enjoys frequent travels to San Miguel de Allende, where he checks out the many new and exciting restaurants opened by chefs from all over the globe. He looks forward to bringing this group of new friends to one of his favorite places!

### Molly Crist

#### *Onward Travel Tour Leader*

Molly grew up on a farm in PA where her mother and grandmother taught cooking classes to culinary enthusiasts for nearly 25 years. Before starting Onward Travel in 2013, Molly owned and operated a gourmet food truck in Michigan and operated a recreational cooking school. Molly studied Hotel Administration at Cornell University and lives on an apple orchard in New York's Hudson Valley.

## Exploring Culture & Cuisine

DAY 2: FRIDAY APRIL 17

- Get to know SMA through an informative walking tour
- Learn to cook a few of Chef Gaby's favorite recipes

Start your day with a delicious breakfast at Casa Calderoni, as you will each morning, complete with fresh fruit and made-to-order hot options. Then we're off on a historical walking tour to learn how this 500 year-old colonial village became the "cradle" of Mexican Independence. We'll visit Parroquia - San Miguel's iconic landmark church, Bellas Artes - once a convent, then San Miguel's first school of art, now a cultural center, Vida y Obra de General Ignacio Allende - David Siqueiros' famous unfinished mural, and so much more. This walking tour social enterprise is headed by volunteers, so all income is directed toward medical and dental care for children in the campos and we'll learn about this important effort.

Hungry yet? Time for a street food lunch! SMA has a fabulous street food culture with many terrific, authentic stands serving up tacos, corn, tortas, birria, so much more. We'll enjoy it then end our time together with helado at Quincy's favorite spot in El Jardín, the main plaza. Enjoy the afternoon as your leisure. Tonight we reconvene for a special cooking class! Chef Gaby, a native of Mexican City, has run four restaurants and a food truck over the past 20 years. She invites us into her restaurant kitchen for a lively, hands-on class where you'll learn about Mexican cooking and use ingredients like cactus, chiles, and amaranth. Sip Mexican wine and expand your culinary knowledge with Chef Gaby.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### CASA CALDERONI

We'll be based at this charming and lauded B&B. The 9 artist-themed rooms are reserved for our group and we'll enjoy exclusive use of Casa Calderoni and its amenities including the rooftop terrace with stunning views. Located just 3 blocks from the city center, the B&B offers clean and comfortable en suite accommodations plus excellent service.



## SMA as You Like It

DAY 3: SATURDAY APRIL 18

- Visit the bustling weekly Organic Market with Chef Quincy
- Join an optional activity and check something off your bucket list

Since it's Saturday in San Miguel de Allende, we'll leave today flexible for festivals and cultural events happening in the city. There's always something fun going on! But first, accompany Chef Quincy to the weekly organic food market that features food and produce stalls plus prepared food vendors. Admire the beautiful products and then enjoy some lunch. The vendors have creative fare, for example... garbanzo and cactus in a guajillo chile broth and stewed rabbit and tortillas handmade with locally grown varieties of corn.

Today is also a great day for an optional excursion! Onward Travel is happy to help you organize a wine tour, horseback riding excursion, or hot air balloon ride. We'll have cocktails together this evening and the rest of the night is yours to dine in SMA and enjoy the nightlife.

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Meals Breakfast

## Astronomical Wonders

DAY 4: SUNDAY APRIL 19

- Travel (way) back in time at Cañada de la Virgen
- Enjoy the company, views, and cocktails at a local resident's home

Today we'll head an hour west of San Miguel de Allende to visit the Cañada de la Virgen archaeological zone, recently opened to the public. Our expert guide will provide an introduction to the pre-Hispanic history of Mexico through visits to the site which was occupied between 540 and 1050 A.D by the Otomi people. Next we'll visit the Museum of Prehispanic Astronomy, led by Dr. Rossana Quiroz Ennis. We'll have an explanation of the architectonic, geographic, and astronomical landscape of Cañada de la Virgen to build on the site we just saw, then dine on a prehispanic lunch featuring indigenous ingredients inspired by the Mesoamerican calendar and the sacred entities that were honored according to the seasons and time of the year.

Partake in siesta this afternoon or a bit of shopping. Quincy's friends, Marty & Jeff, invite us for a happy hour at their lovely home overlooking the city. Quincy will make a featured cocktail! Dinner tonight is a special occasion at The Restaurant, a chic and popular spot with a native Californian chef/owner.

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OnwardTravel.co Based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the Hudson Valley, New York

## Culinary Treasures

DAY 5: MONDAY APRIL 20

- Take an informative cooking class at SMA's premier cooking school
- Taste Mezcal at a hip spot devoted to the spirit

Today features a cooking class at the Sazón Cooking School, located in an 18th-century mansion at luxury hotel Belmond Casa de Sierra Nevada. *The group will be divided in two small groups so you'll either have a morning/lunch class or afternoon/dinner class.* Visit a food market with Chef Ruben to sample and admire the local products. The class will feature healthy Mexican cooking. Use organic, seasonal ingredients to create inspiring dishes. Chef Ruben is informative and engaging and the class culminates with a wonderful three-course meal.

To gain some more delicious knowledge, we'll head to La Mezcalería to taste and learn about Mexico's hottest spirit, Mezcal. This smoky spirit made from agave is worth the craze it started. Sample a few different Mezcals and perhaps some fried grasshoppers!

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner



## Art, Tequila & Cooking with Chef Quincy

DAY 6: TUESDAY APRIL 21

- [Get creative at Fábrica La Aurora](#)
- [Help prepare our farewell feast with Chef Quincy](#)

Savor a leisurely morning on our last full day together. It's a perfect opportunity to visit a museum, go souvenir shopping, or visit the expansive Tuesday market with Chef Quincy as he shops for tonight's dinner. Or simply stroll the beautiful streets of SMA! After lunch, we'll visit Fábrica La Aurora, a renovated textile mill home to galleries, design stores, a bookstore, cafes, exhibition spaces, and studios for local artists. Enjoy this showcase of Mexican craftsmanship and partake in a painting workshop to create your own special keepsake from our trip together!

A private tequila tasting awaits us at historic La Casa Dragones, the original 17th century stables of the legendary Dragones cavalry of San Miguel de Allende. We'll partake in a comprehensive tasting of Casa Dragones Joven, to learn about the techniques and craft behind the "World's #1 Sipping Tequila." Now we're in the mood for a fun evening! We're preparing our own dinner tonight at Casa Calderoni, led by Chef Quincy. Dive in hands-on or watch from the sidelines as we create a delicious feast together. Buen provecho!

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Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Hasta Luego!

DAY 7: WEDNESDAY APRIL 22

No activities are scheduled today and we wish you a safe journey home or to your next destination. Onward Travel will organize airport transfers.

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Meals Breakfast



## Trip Essentials

BEGINS	San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, on Thursday, April 16 Welcome toast at Casa Calderoni at 5pm Airport transfer organized per your arriving flight.
ENDS	San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, on Wednesday, April 22 No activities are scheduled Airport transfer organized per your departing flight.
SUITABILITY & MOBILITY	<b><u>This tour includes walking for 15-30 minutes at a time, plus stairs and cobblestones.</u></b> We will be mostly getting around SMA on foot and not all facilities have elevators so stairs should be expected. Travelers may always opt out of activities they deem too physically challenging but refunds will not be provided.
TRIP LENGTH	7 days, 6 nights
TOUR DATES & PRICE	April 16–22, 2020 Double Occupancy \$2,650 per traveler Single Supplement \$350 (please inquire, limited availability)  <i>Contact Onward if you are interested in extending your stay. Note that air travel is not included and a current passport is required for travel to Mexico. You are welcome to pay by credit card, please add a 3% surcharge.</i>

## Trip price includes the following:

- Airport transfers and ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities.
- Six nights accommodations at Casa Calderoni.
- Most meals: daily breakfasts, four lunches, and four dinners. We have fantastic gourmet experiences, wine and cocktails included.
- Local experts and guides plus an Onward Travel Tour Director and Chef Quincy hosting.
- Activities, tastings, cooking classes, and tours as detailed in the itinerary.

### ***Register now!***

Visit [onwardtravel.co](https://onwardtravel.co) to complete the registration form and submit payment.

Space is limited to only 14 travelers.

\$1,000 deposit due upon booking, balance due by February 1, 2020.

## AIR TRAVEL:

The tour will start and end with transfers to/from Del Bajío Airport in Leon (BJX) or Querétaro Airport (QRO). For Chicago-based folks, note there are nonstop flights from Midway to BJJ with Volaris Airline but you'll want to arrive a day early as the daily flight lands after 7pm. There are options with American and United with domestic connections for the trip dates. Please wait to book international airfare until we've reached the minimum number of required participants. Contact Onward Travel for assistance booking flights.

## TRIP INFORMATION *La Cocina de San Miguel de Allende April 16–22, 2020*

### About The Chopping Block

The Chopping Block is a Chicago-based recreational cooking school, with locations in Merchandise Mart and Logan Square. For 20 years, TCB has been on a mission to get the country to cook. Owner Shelley Young has assembled a talented team of “chefstuctors” who teach classes featuring topics that range from sushi to mixology to modern Italian cuisine. The Chopping Block has offered previous culinary adventures to Italy and France in partnership with Onward Travel.

### About Onward Travel

Onward Travel is a group tour operator owned and operated by sisters Molly Crist and Katerina Dhand. Onward Travel is focused on unique, thoughtful small group tours with itineraries that are researched and pieced together carefully to ensure authentic, engaging trips that foster genuine connection to places and people. A deep love of hospitality and adventure has been in Molly and Kat’s blood for generations as Onward Travel is inspired by their family’s cooking school on a farm in Bucks County, PA that offered culinary-focused travel to customers for over two decades.

### Guanajuato In April

April is a wonderful time to travel to San Miguel de Allende. Average high temperatures hover between 73° and 88°F year round but there’s very little rain or humidity in April. Temperatures dip in the evenings but expect pleasant summer weather during the days and lots of sunshine. You’ll notice there isn’t much air conditioning in the city so be prepared for some heat but all in all, the lovely climate is one of SMA’s most desirable traits! Onward Travel will provide packing notes in advance of the trip.

### Miscellaneous Travel Information

- *Passports are required for American citizens travelling to Europe. Visas are not required. Note your passport should be valid for at least the duration of your trip.*
- *To determine the current exchange rate, Google “USD to MXN.” Currently there are approximately 20 Mexican Pesos to 1 U.S. Dollar.*
- *Travel Protection: Onward Travel recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. Travel protection plans include coverage for Trip Cancellation, Trip Interruption, Emergency Medical and Emergency Evacuation/Repatriation, Trip Delay, Baggage Delay and more. For more information on the recommended plans or to enroll, contact Travelex Insurance Services at 800-228-9792 and reference location number 32-0704.*
- *For a summary of plan details on benefits, coverages, limitations and exclusions, please refer to the applicable Description of Coverage. Travel Insurance is underwritten by*

## Get in Touch!

Contact Molly with questions or special requests:

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