

Design and Construction Guidelines for the Vista Antigua Condominium

English Reference Translation

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Contents

Contents	3
1. Introduction	4
A. History	4
B. Geography	4
2. Review and Authorization Process	4
A. Purpose of Reviews and the Application Process	4
B. Meeting Before Beginning the Design Process	4
C. Review of the Proposal or Preliminary Project	5
D. Final Design Review	5
E. Implementation Observations	6
3. Guidelines for Green Areas and Exterior Areas	6
A. Description of the Different Areas of the Development	6
B. Green Areas	6
C. Exterior Wall Gradients	6
D. Garages and Parking Areas	7
E. Terraces, Gardens, and Landscaping	7
F. Grilles, Railings, and Wrought-Iron Doors	7
G. Fountains, Swimming Pools, and Irrigation Systems	7
H. Lighting	7
I. Skylights and Domes	8
J. Exterior Service Areas	8
4. Architectural Design Guidelines	8
A. Integrity and Quality of the Project Design	8
B. Project Size and Proportion in Relation to the Lot	8
C. Materials	9
D. Projections and Overhangs	9
E. Visual Terminations and Roofs	9
F. Windows and Doors	9
G. Building Line	10
H. Colors	10
I. Chimneys, Vaults, and Domes	10
5. Construction Guidelines	10
A. Construction Area	10
B. Environmental Requirements	11
C. Sanitary Facilities	11

D. Temporary Facilities	11
E. Noise	11
F. Parking and Access Areas	11
G. Working Hours	11
H. Safety	11
I. Removal of Trash and Rubble	12
J. Information and Identification for Each Construction Project	12
6. Appendix	12
A. Form	12
Translator's Notes	13

Reference translation notice. This English translation has been prepared as faithfully as possible from the Spanish document titled Lineamientos de Diseño y Construcción en el Condominio Vista Antigua. It is provided for information and convenience. It is not a certified translation and does not replace or modify the Spanish original. Where the Spanish text contains typographical errors, incomplete wording, or possible inconsistencies, the translation follows the most reasonable reading without changing the apparent intent. Fees, procedures, deadlines, and municipal requirements should be confirmed as current before reliance or publication.

Contents

1. Introduction A. History
B. Geography
2. Review and Authorization Process A. Purpose of Reviews and the Application Process
B. Meeting Before Beginning the Design Process
C. Review of the Proposal or Preliminary Project
D. Final Design Review
E. Implementation Observations
3. Guidelines for Green Areas and Exterior Areas A. Description of the Different Areas of the Development
B. Green Areas
C. Exterior Wall Gradients
 1. Combining Lots
 2. Retaining Walls
D. Garages and Parking Areas
E. Terraces, Gardens, and Landscaping
F. Grilles, Railings, and Wrought-Iron Doors
G. Fountains, Swimming Pools, and Irrigation Systems
H. Lighting
I. Skylights and Domes
J. Exterior Service Areas
4. Architectural Design Guidelines A. Integrity and Quality of the Project Design
B. Project Size and Proportion in Relation to the Lot
C. Materials
D. Projections and Overhangs
E. Visual Terminations and Roofs
F. Windows and Doors
G. Building Line
H. Colors
I. Chimneys, Vaults, and Domes
5. Construction Guidelines A. Construction Area
B. Environmental Requirements
C. Sanitary Facilities
D. Temporary Facilities
E. Noise
F. Parking and Access Areas
G. Working Hours
H. Safety
I. Removal of Trash and Rubble
J. Information and Identification for Each Construction Project
6. Appendix A. Form

1. Introduction

The purpose of these regulations is to support and protect the investment of all members of this development, which has been carefully planned to provide us with the opportunity to enjoy a twenty-first-century lifestyle in combination with the remarkable sixteenth-century buildings found in the wonderful City of San Miguel de Allende.

A. History

After the conquest of Tenochtitlán in 1521, Indigenous peoples allied with Hernán Cortés, such as the Tlaxcalans and Otomí, spread throughout the central part of what is now the Mexican Republic. Their territory ended where that of more warlike and unconquered peoples, such as the Chichimecas, began. San Miguel de Allende, formerly San Miguel de los Chichimecas, was founded in 1542 by Fray Juan de San Miguel (in what is now San Miguel Viejo). Because it was difficult to obtain water and food and the settlement was vulnerable to nomadic tribes, it was moved in 1554 to what is now central San Miguel, at the initiative of a group of Spaniards led by Ángel Villafañe. It received the status of a Spanish town under the name San Miguel el Grande.

Since viceregal times, this city has been a special community. Its people have made it unique by preserving its architecture and customs, enchanting residents and visitors alike and making it a city in which one wishes to remain.

B. Geography

San Miguel de Allende is located at 20°55' north latitude and 100°44' west longitude from the Greenwich meridian. The climate is temperate and subhumid, with summer rains and moderate frosts in winter. The municipal seat is 1,900 meters above sea level, although elevations within the municipality range from 1,800 to 2,700 meters. Rainfall occurs from June through September, with an average annual total of 550 mm. Winds run from northwest-southwest to southwest-northwest.

Vegetation ranges from low deciduous forest to arid-zone scrub, dominated by mesquite, prickly pear cactus, barrel cactus, and garambullo. The Laja River is its tributary, and the Picachos hills are an extension of the Sierra de Guanajuato, corresponding to the mountain chain known as the Sierra Madre Oriental.

2. Review and Authorization Process

A. Purpose of Reviews and the Application Process

The purpose of this section is to explain the application process for project approval. This process involves a series of small meetings among the owner, the owner's designer or architect, and the Vista Antigua Architecture Committee. The process begins with an introductory meeting and concludes with completion of the construction work in Vista Antigua. All design meetings are intended to guide the owner efficiently toward completion of the project and to ensure a satisfactory result for the benefit of all owners in the development.

1. Project-review application cost: \$6,000 pesos (the Spanish original also spells this amount as "five thousand pesos"). Includes a topographic survey. Price subject to change.
2. Application form (see Appendix).

B. Meeting Before Beginning the Design Process

Before any project is prepared or undertaken, the Architecture Committee, the owner, and the designer or architect must meet for a detailed explanation of these design guidelines, the current Construction Regulations of the Municipality of San Miguel de Allende, and the Vista Antigua Condominium Regulations. If the participants do not have any of these documents, copies will be

provided at that meeting. The primary purpose is to answer any questions from the owners or their designer concerning optimal orientation, restrictions affecting the lot (if any), and requirements that must be satisfied before construction.

C. Review of the Proposal or Preliminary Project

After the pre-design meeting, the owner must submit the initial plans to the Vista Antigua offices for the attention of the Architecture Committee. At a minimum, these must include:

1. A lot diagram at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100.
2. An aerial view showing the mass of the proposed project situated on the land, distinguishing green areas, exterior spaces, garages, and roofed areas.
3. Architectural floor plan(s) at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100.
4. Preliminary elevations at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100, specifying the materials to be used on the façade.
5. A proposed sanitary-installation design for the purpose of reviewing the routing of filtered rainwater and garden-irrigation water.
6. A preliminary plan of the temporary facilities required for carrying out the work.

All of these items may be submitted on letter-size sheets with good-quality hand drawings. Item six must explain the location of the storage shed, materials, waste, and portable toilets.

The Vista Antigua Architecture Committee must review the submission and prepare appropriate comments for delivery to the owner at the second meeting. If corrections are required, the reasons will be explained and the best solution will be sought together with the owner. This review must take no more than seven business days so that execution of the work is not delayed.

D. Final Design Review

The owner must resubmit the final design proposal with all necessary project information on 90 × 60 cm sheets, drawn by hand or computer, showing dimensions, levels, human scale, and names of spaces. The submission must include a copy of the owner's deed, the most recent property-tax receipt, the owner's identification, the SAPASMA contract and official street number, as well as structural calculations or a preliminary structural analysis.

These requirements are intended to facilitate each owner's application for a construction permit before the Urban Development Department. Obtaining that permit is the responsibility of each owner.

A response to the request must be delivered within no more than seven business days, and the Committee will issue its approval or recommendations in writing.

If there are observations, they must be reviewed at another meeting between the Committee and the owner so that the best solution may be found jointly. After this meeting, the owner must resubmit the corrected final project for approval. If there are no observations, the owner will receive the project-approval letter and must then submit the project to the Urban Development Department to obtain the construction permit.

1. **Changes to the project.** Changes to façades and roofs after final project approval must be reported to the Vista Antigua Architecture Committee so they may be reviewed and approved within no more than seven days.
2. **Interruption of construction.** When construction is interrupted for any reason, the Architecture Committee and the Vista Antigua administration must be informed so they are aware and may apply the Vista Antigua Condominium Regulations. Construction may not remain suspended for more than 60 calendar days.

E. Implementation Observations

Before work on any project begins, the owner must provide the workers with the following facilities: a portable toilet; storage for tools and equipment; and the rules of conduct and recommendations contained in the Vista Antigua Condominium Regulations. The owner must also inform the Committee of the name of the construction manager responsible for the work so that this person may be contacted regarding any event or question arising during the process.

The owner will be required to remove completely all debris and waste from the work and to clean the street pavement and sidewalks as necessary.

3. Guidelines for Green Areas and Exterior Areas

A. Description of the Different Areas of the Development

With great respect for the natural environment and architecture of San Miguel de Allende, the creator of Vista Antigua retained EDSA, a company recognized worldwide for successful site planning, to design Vista Antigua. The objective was to provide attractive and peaceful views in every direction. Accordingly, the site contains many green areas with different uses around the boundary lots on Paseo Lavanda, Circuito Jazmín, Paseo Vista Antigua, and Calle Maguey.

One green area serves to separate the lots from the development's perimeter wall. This area may be used by all Vista Antigua owners and residents, provided it is used responsibly.

The rear boundary walls of the lots on Calle Violeta serve as the condominium perimeter wall. Therefore, they must be solid to a height of at least three meters. Nothing prevents such a wall from also serving as a load-bearing wall for part of the house.

B. Green Areas

There are green islands on Paseo Vista Antigua, Circuito Bugambilia, and Paseo Lavanda. Their primary purposes are to beautify and organize axial circulation and to provide privacy for the entrances to the surrounding lots. These areas must also be used responsibly.

The rear sides of the interior lots on Circuito Jazmín adjoin a green area. These lots are authorized to have an exit or direct access to this green area, whether or not the doors block the view into the property. They may also have window openings, with or without glass. The maximum height of walls or buildings adjoining this green area may not exceed 3 m.

During construction, green areas may not be used for storing materials or waste, and temporary facilities may not be placed in them.

The use of exposed, low-maintenance materials such as stone, adobe, ashlar, and similar materials is encouraged. Materials may not be deposited and temporary facilities may not be installed within this area.

C. Exterior Wall Gradients

As stated in the current Construction Regulations of the Municipality of San Miguel de Allende, the city's prevailing urban profile has been formed by the stepped pattern created by the terrain's topography. In Vista Antigua, the development's urban plan takes full advantage of the natural slopes of the site so that façades may relate to the colonial architecture of San Miguel de Allende.

1. **Combining lots.** This applies to owners of two or more adjoining lots who intend to combine them into one property.
2. **Retaining walls.** Required retaining walls must have the same characteristics as perimeter walls and must maintain a clean appearance with acceptable finishes if they also serve as façades.

D. Garages and Parking Areas

Covered or uncovered garages and parking areas must have doors and/or gates that completely block the view from outside, and the doors or gates must swing toward the interior of the property. The material of the sidewalk or street may not be altered; any repair must match what already exists.

To facilitate access, ramps may be built using the same material as the sidewalk and with a slope of no more than 3%. The ramp must taper toward the sides so that it does not obstruct or impede free pedestrian passage.

No type of ramp may be built in the roadway.

To avoid delayed repairs to sidewalks and streets, the interested party will be required to provide a security deposit of \$10,000 pesos. It will be returned upon submission of the notice that the work has been completed.

E. Terraces, Gardens, and Landscaping

Terraces must always face the interior of the property. Their treatment may be whatever the owner chooses, provided it complies with the current Construction Regulations of the Municipality of San Miguel de Allende. Interior gardens must be planned so that the roots and branches of large trees do not damage buildings on adjoining lots or create unsafe conditions for neighbors. It should be noted that the best way to maintain a garden in optimum condition at this latitude is to use primarily native plants that require little water and are resistant to changes in temperature.

Exterior landscaping or planters must be maintained and monitored by the owner and may not exceed the permitted area specified in the section on the building line.

F. Grilles, Railings, and Wrought-Iron Doors

Grilles or grille doors will be permitted only when there is a wooden door before or behind the grille so that a direct view into the property is blocked.

Railings on balconies and windows may project no more than 15 cm beyond the property line over the street.

Railings on terraces and parapets may not be visible from the street and must be oriented toward the interior of the property.

G. Fountains, Swimming Pools, and Irrigation Systems

If a project includes fountains on any façade, the owner is obligated to provide the maintenance necessary for their proper operation and appearance.

Swimming pools are subject to regulation only when they adjoin another property. In that case, the owner will be required to maintain the pool structure in good working condition to prevent damage to the structures on adjoining properties.

If garden-irrigation systems are installed, the owner is asked, in view of the scarcity of water in the region, to ensure that they are efficient and that excess water does not damage adjoining structures.

H. Lighting

Lighting in exterior areas must not be so bright that it creates a risk for vehicles or pedestrians. The safety of the type of light fixture to be used is also important.

I. Skylights and Domes

Visible skylight domes of any shape—pyramidal, square, round, or otherwise—will not be permitted, nor will gardens enclosed or surrounded by glass. Covered skylights may not extend more than 60 cm above the level of the finished roof slab.

Original illustration caption: Authorized skylights.

Domes and lanterns may not exceed the height limit established by the current Construction Regulations for San Miguel de Allende.

Original illustration caption: Unauthorized skylights.

J. Exterior Service Areas

If the project includes direct access to service areas such as laundries, patios, storage rooms, or parking areas, these areas must have doors and windows that block the view into the interior and provide security for users and passersby.

The storage of hazardous substances, trash, or any other type of organic or inorganic waste will not be permitted in any area intended for service use, whether inside or outside the property.

4. Architectural Design Guidelines

A. Integrity and Quality of the Project Design

The concept of the Vista Antigua condominium development is to give its residents the opportunity to live in a space suited to a twenty-first-century lifestyle and their personal needs, while using an architectural style appropriate to San Miguel, which is characterized by colonial-style buildings and contains very important examples of that architecture.

Primary objectives:

1. Create buildings that harmonize with the concept of the City of San Miguel de Allende.
2. Design residences that respond to the climate and native landscape.
3. Ensure that Vista Antigua buildings and structures convey a sense of permanence and quality.
4. Ensure that the materials used in each project are of good quality and represent the standard intended for this condominium development.

These design guidelines are not intended to limit the designer's creativity, but to create a development that is harmonious with its context and principles. High-Tech, Deconstructivist, Classicist, or Gothic projects will not be approved.

Original illustration caption: Unauthorized styles.

B. Project Size and Proportion in Relation to the Lot

The proposed construction on the lot must include green space or areas free of construction that provide a sense of spaciousness both to the owner and to the other Vista Antigua residents. Every Vista Antigua lot has a height restriction measured from the highest point of the highest street or sidewalk adjoining the lot. The restrictions are therefore as follows.

Lots with a height restriction of 5 meters:

- Circuito Jazmín Nos. 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, and 22
- Paseo Vista Antigua Nos. 25, 29, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, and 49
- Calle Violeta Nos. 14 and 16

Lots with a height restriction of 6 meters:

- Calle Violeta Nos. 37, 39, 41, and 43

All other lots have a height restriction of 8.5 meters.

Under the Vista Antigua condominium regulations, the minimum permitted construction is not less than 130 square meters of fully roofed area. Twenty percent of the total lot must be allocated to green area. Every project that is begun must be completed in its entirety within the following 24 months.

C. Materials

Traditional local materials are the most acceptable for constructing walls, façades, roofs, windows, doors, floors, paving, and similar elements visible from the exterior. These include natural stone, cantera stone, brick, roof tile, wood, and iron.

Any new or innovative material used in contemporary architecture must be planned for the interior of the property and carefully selected in consultation with the Vista Antigua Architecture Committee. All materials must be used honestly in a manner that expresses their function or capability.

D. Projections and Overhangs

No overhang or projection of more than 15 cm over the street will be approved, and no decoration projecting into adjoining lots will be approved. Proposals for any overhang or projection toward the interior of the property will, however, remain within the designer's discretion.

Exterior installations such as electricity and water meters or gas service connections must be visible on the façade; they must be recessed into the walls and covered or partially covered. Cantera frames and cornices are the only elements that may, depending on the façade design, extend more than 15 cm, provided they do not present a danger to pedestrians.

Original illustration caption: Electricity and water service connections.

Balconies proposed as part of a façade design must be considered from the beginning of the project in relation to the lot's building line.

Original illustration caption: Projections and overhangs.

E. Visual Terminations and Roofs

Visual terminations are views seen from public streets and public lookout points. Vista Antigua seeks to offer views of San Miguel; therefore, owners and designers are asked, when designing the tops and terminations of walls and roofs, to consider the context of this city.

Oblique terminations or slopes greater than 8% will not be permitted; roofs must appear flat. Vaults or domes must be screened or located toward the interior. The use of roof lanterns that do not project prominently toward the front of the property is customary.

Original illustration caption: Visual terminations and roofs.

Tile roofs will be permitted only toward the interior of the property and in exterior spaces such as terraces or parking areas.

F. Windows and Doors

Windows on façades must retain vertical proportions. Windows toward the interior of the property may have any proportions, provided they are not visible from a public street.

Original illustration caption: Windows and doors.

Traditional materials such as wood, wrought iron, and glass must be used for façade windows. Aluminum or shiny stainless-steel windows or frames will not be permitted. Any grille may project up to 15 cm beyond the building line, and all such grilles must open inward.

Entrance doors must also retain vertical proportions, except garage doors. Garage doors may have a maximum width of 4.5 m and must be treated as discreetly as possible. If a broad parking entrance or two garage doors are needed, they must be separated by a space of not less than 80 cm.

G. Building Line

As provided in Article Seven of Chapter Two of the current regulations of the Municipality of San Miguel de Allende, the building line is “the line or trace on the lot or lots established by the competent authorities to delimit a property where it adjoins an existing public street shown on plans, or one contemplated in a project approved by the master plan.”

In Vista Antigua, the project may be set back up to two meters from the point at which the lot begins. If this is done, the owner is obligated to maintain and preserve in good condition the paving, planters, and/or fountains placed in this area.

Steps, ramps, railings, planters, or fountains that obstruct free passage on the sidewalks will not be permitted.

H. Colors

Surfaces and façades facing public streets must be finished with limewash or vinyl paint that is neither plastic-looking nor glossy, in ochre, earth, green, or terracotta colors, which are the colors authorized by the San Miguel de Allende regulations.

These colored surfaces may have smooth, porous, or medium-to-heavy relief textures, as provided by the regulations, and may include a base or protective lower band no higher than one-third of the height of the ground floor.

I. Chimneys, Vaults, and Domes

The heights of chimneys, vaults, and domes will be determined by the Vista Antigua Architecture Committee after evaluating the views.

The designer or project architect is responsible for ensuring that their style is visually integrated with the project and the general concept of the Vista Antigua Condominium, while making sure they do not create a visual problem for adjoining lots.

Vaults and domes may be faced with metallic tiles or Talavera tiles within the range of colors authorized for façades. Their finishing elements may be carved cantera figures, cement, ceramic, or another type of sculpture related to the project.

5. Construction Guidelines

A. Construction Area

The construction area is the limited, but not necessarily enclosed, area where subcontractors may park for loading and unloading materials, unroll or lay out materials, and carry out any other activity that must occur outside the building. When approving the proposed project, the Vista Antigua Architecture Committee will define this area to prevent it from encroaching on the adjoining building's construction area and vice versa.

The entrance to the construction site must be closed and protected outside working hours or whenever no one is inside. During the dry season, builders will be asked to sprinkle a small amount of water on the soil to prevent excessive dust from affecting existing residents.

B. Environmental Requirements

Vista Antigua is concerned with protecting the environment. Builders are therefore asked not to disturb residents during construction and to provide their workers with the facilities necessary for the proper operation of the project, for the benefit of everyone.

C. Sanitary Facilities

The subcontractor must provide workers with a portable toilet, which must be cleaned every three days. Alternatively, the subcontractor must install the drainage required for a toilet with its own enclosure inside the construction site.

Construction projects without such a facility will not be permitted.

D. Temporary Facilities

Temporary facilities are those that enable the subcontractor to organize and operate the construction project properly.

1. **Storage sheds.** These may be prefabricated or built of wood and dark-colored sheet material to form an enclosure. They must remain within the predetermined construction area.
2. **Trash containers.** Drums or covered bins must be provided for collecting organic waste—food scraps, paper, wood, and similar material—which must be placed in compost or, alternatively, collected by the trash truck. Inorganic waste must be collected periodically together with construction rubble.
3. **Lighting.** At least one floodlight must be provided inside the construction site at night for the safety of pedestrians and residents, without disturbing the privacy of neighboring houses.
4. **Stoves and cooking fires.** Workers' customs, including lighting a fire to heat food, will be respected, provided the smoke does not create a problem for nearby residences. Necessary safety measures must be taken to prevent fire.

E. Noise

With respect to construction noise, it is understood that it is sometimes impossible to keep sound levels low. Subcontractors are nevertheless advised to schedule the noisiest work during normal working hours to avoid noise pollution for residents. For the same reason, pets will not be permitted in work areas.

F. Parking and Access Areas

Contractor parking areas will be limited by the construction area, but there is no restriction inside the property. Material suppliers and workers may enter only through the gate designated for them and must identify themselves when entering and leaving.

G. Working Hours

The suggested working hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday only.

H. Safety

Real-estate activity in the City of San Miguel has increased year after year, making it necessary to hire subcontractors from other cities. It is important for Vista Antigua to maintain safety on each lot under construction, both for residents and workers. Excavations and openings should be clearly marked, scaffolding secured, installations inspected, and workers trained in construction-site safety. Vista Antigua will not be responsible for any accident resulting from a lack of safety within a construction site.

Workers and subcontractors must enter the property and identify themselves to the entrance personnel each time they enter the development after work begins.

The watchman is the only person who may live inside the construction site; no one else may do so.

I. Removal of Trash and Rubble

At the completion of each project, the subcontractor and owner are asked to remove all trash and construction rubble left in the public street, as well as cement residue from the pavement of streets and sidewalks. If the trash and rubble are not removed within no more than fifteen days, they will be subject to a monetary penalty of \$20,000 pesos or its equivalent in U.S. dollars.

J. Information and Identification for Each Construction Project

At the beginning of each construction project, a sign must be placed in a visible location containing information about the project, the subcontractor, and the responsible construction manager, together with a telephone number for questions or clarification. The sticker required by the Urban Development Department must also be displayed.

6. Appendix

A. Form

Field	Information
Folio	A001
Type of project	
Start date	
Owner information	
Architect information	
Project address	
Project supervisor	
Name	
Address	
Telephone / Email	
Project information	
Square meters to be built	
Green areas	
Materials to be used	
Ornamental elements	
Adjoins / bounded by	
Pavement	
Materials	
Name and signature of authorizing person	
Name and signature of applicant	
Cost	
Payments	

Translator's Notes

1. The Spanish source names the reviewing body Comité de Arquitectos. This translation uses **Architecture Committee**, the name adopted for the Vista Antigua Website project.
2. The source states the application cost numerically as \$6,000 pesos but spells it out as “five thousand pesos.” Both readings are preserved in Section 2.A so the inconsistency can be resolved by the HOA.
3. The source uses the abbreviation “msnm,” translated as “meters above sea level.”
4. Apparent typographical errors in the Spanish source were corrected only where the intended meaning was reasonably clear. No attempt has been made to update the substance of the rules.
5. Illustration captions from the source have been retained in italic text. The images themselves are not reproduced in this clean reference edition.