

Poster

Ethnobotanical garden in the *Huizachtepetl*

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Introduction. The *Huizachtepetl* or *Cerro de la Estrella* (Mountain of the Star), holds an important position in the history of Mexico. The Aztec people celebrated the new fire ceremony there every 52 years, the success of which allowed the earth to be renewed for another cycle. Currently, the *Cerro de la Estrella* remains a special site, with more than 2 million people visiting every year. This project focuses on the historical record of botanical gardens that existed 500 years ago in Mexico City and its environs, such as *Chapultepec* and *Iztapalapan* in the Mexica capital, and in nearby *Tezcutzinco* in *Texcoco*.

Objectives. The primary objective of this project (Proyecto de Investigación Antropológica Cerro de la Estrella (PIACE)), is the reconstruction of an ethnobotanical garden; consisting of native flora, which existed in the Valley of Mexico during the Aztec period.

Methods. To accomplish this objective, we have made several field surveys and inventories of the plants growing at the *Cerro de la Estrella*. We intend to label each plant with its common and scientific names, their uses (medicinal, food, textile, etc.), geographic distribution, and archaeological provenience.

Results. The plants which were considered to be at the botanical garden were divided into categories of use, such as medicinal, ritual, edible and ornamental. The archaeobotanical record of Mexico City's historical district consists of 70 distinct taxa comprised of assorted trees and herbs, all of which were important for their practical and symbolic uses. The native flora most represented in the garden are *Maguey* (*Agave* sp), *Oceloxochitl* (*Tigridia pavonia*), *Pericón* (*Tagetes lucida*), *Biznaga* (*Echinocactus* sp), *Nopal* (*Opuntia* sp), *Azcalxóchitl* (*Sprekelia formosissima*), *Cuachalalato* (*Dioscorea galeottiana*), *Teosinte* (*Zea mexicana*) and *Copal* (*Bursera fagaroides*).

Conclusion. The ethnobotanical garden of the "*Cerro de la Estrella* Project" will commemorate the gardens of *Iztapalapa*, which astounded the conquistadores Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo.

Keywords: Garden, Ethnobotany, valley of Mexico, archaeobotanical, *Cerro de la Estrella*

Selected References

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