

## 2010 Mexico's Year in Chicago

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Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley

Mexico's Year in Chicago: City gearing up for 2010 celebrations  
By Leticia Espinosa Tribune newspapers  
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With Mayor Richard Daley intending to declare 2010 as "Mexico's Year in Chicago," some of the city's leading cultural institutions are planning events to commemorate the bicentennial of Mexico's independence and the centennial of its revolution.

The events will include concerts by musical groups popular with the city's large and growing Latino population. But some of the city's large cultural institutions, such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, also will participate, according to the Mexican consulate in Chicago.

"We are seeking to strengthen the image of Mexico and the Mexican community in the Midwest," said Jaime Almonte, the consulate's program coordinator. "We are excited. We want to generate greater awareness in the community about the meaning of the celebrations and include a wide participation." Almonte said in an interview last week that the program will be launched in February with the start of several activities that will run throughout the year.

Carlos Tortolero president of the National Museum of Mexican Art

"These celebrations are historic," said Carlos Tortolero, president and founder of the National Museum of Mexican Art.

Tortolero began holding meetings with the city about three years ago to build support for the festivities, and he received a letter from Daley stating that "as mayor of this City of Chicago, I am informing you of my intention to declare 2010 'Mexico's Year in Chicago.'"

"Chicago is very proud of its diversity and its significant Mexican population and our Sister City relation with Mexico City. I am looking forward to the programs and celebrations planned to commemorate Mexico's (Independence) in 2010," Daley wrote in the letter.

Tortolero said his institution and other museums will be presenting commemorative exhibits. He said "the most amazing one will be (an) exhibit of gigantic sculptures at Millennium Park. For the first time a Latina, a Mexican woman, Yvonne Domenge, will showcase her works" from November 2010 to August 2012.

Luis Rossi, a promoter for Viva Entertainment, said that a big festival is being planned for the Plaza Garibaldi in commemoration of the important dates. "We will bring artists of the caliber of Los Tigres del Norte, Conjunto Primavera or Intocables; and perhaps someone else like (balladeer) Vicente Fernández," Rossi said. "We are trying to see what else can be added."

Almonte said the Art Institute of Chicago, Ravinia Festival and the Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier are among the participants, as well as public education institutions. He said the Jay Pritzker stage at Millennium Park has been reserved for civic ceremonies in September.

Salvador Pedroza, chairman of the Board of Directors of Little Village Chamber of Commerce, one of the participating organizations, said a parade is being planned with special guests from Mexico and prominent Mexican-American personalities.

"The most important thing is for us to disseminate what we are commemorating, to create a common awareness about the meaning of the 200 years of Mexican Independence and the 100 years of the Revolution," Almonte said.